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FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING

EASTERN AFFAIRS

PART XIX

**CLOSED
UNTIL**

1977

JULY TO DECEMBER 1926

58

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PART XIX

JULY TO DECEMBER 1926

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CONFIDENTIAL.

Further Correspondence respecting Eastern Affairs.

PART XIX.

CHAPTER I.—ARABIA.

No. 1.

Lord Lloyd to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received July 1.)

(No. 321.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Cairo, July 1, 1926.

JEDDAH telegram No. 70.

Egyptian Government have telegraphically ordered Mahmal to return to Egypt without proceeding to Medina.
(Repeated to Jeddah.)

No. 2.

Acting Agent, Jeddah, to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received July 2.)

(No. 72.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Jeddah, July 1, 1926.

MY telegram No. 70.

From information received it appears that fanatical Wahabis were aggressors in Mahmal incident, and that Amir-el-Haj refrained from taking defensive measures until he and many of his people had been injured by stone-throwers and several isolated shots had been fired by Akhwan.

Egyptians used rifles and mountain guns, and losses, which are variously estimated at 38–200, must have been great, owing to congested state of traffic on the Mecca-Arafat road.

Seven Akhwan sheikhs were killed.

Mahmal is proceeding to Medina, via Jeddah-Yambo, on 4th or 5th July.

(Sent to India and Cairo.)

No. 3.

Sir Austen Chamberlain to Mr. Jordan (Jeddah).

(No. 50.)

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, July 4, 1926.

KING FEISAL has been compelled to leave Bagdad on a visit to Europe for reasons of health, and arrangements have been made for ex-King Ali to act as Regent during his absence. Having regard to Ali's past relations with Ibn Saud and to possibility that his appointment as Regent may arouse the latter's suspicions, you are authorised to inform Ibn Saud that Ali has intimated to His Majesty's Government his desire to forget all past differences and to act as Regent solely in the interests of Irak.

I trust that this will completely reassure Ibn Saud.

[E 3899/344/91]

No. 4.

Sir Austen Chamberlain to M. de Fleuriau.

Your Excellency,

Foreign Office, July 6, 1926.

ON the 17th June your Excellency was so good as to inform Sir W. Tyrrell of the conclusion of a commercial convention between the High Commissioner for Syria and Ibn Saud. You further enquired what attitude His Majesty's Government intend to adopt towards that ruler.

2. I appreciate highly the friendly action of your Government in communicating to me this information, and I reciprocate cordially the desire expressed by you for the closest co-operation in the Near East between our two Governments.

3. In reply to your enquiry I have the honour to inform you that His Majesty's Government are in friendly relations with Ibn Saud, whom they recognised as King of the Hejaz in March last. Prior to this Sir Gilbert Clayton had concluded in November 1925, with Ibn Saud in his capacity as Sultan of Nejd, two agreements, which are known as the Bahra and Hadda Agreements. The first, which Sir G. Clayton signed on behalf of the Iraq Government, defines the relations between Iraq and Nejd. The second, which he signed on behalf of His Majesty's Government, deals with the relations between Transjordan and Nejd. I have the honour to transmit to you the accompanying copies of the White Paper containing the texts of these instruments.*

4. As regards the Holy Places of Islam, the policy of His Majesty's Government remains unchanged. Now, as in the past, His Majesty's Government are determined to avoid any form of intervention in questions affecting the Moslem religion. They have always discouraged any attempt by British non-Moslems to enter the interior of the Hejaz. At the same time they are concerned for the welfare of Moslem pilgrims from the British Empire, and are interested in any measures which may tend to improve the conditions in which they make the pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina.

5. Relations with Ibn Saud are maintained through His Majesty's agent and consul at Jeddah. His Majesty's Government further contemplate the eventual conclusion of a treaty of friendship with Ibn Saud.

I have, &c.

AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN.

[E 4184/572/91]

No. 5.

Vice-Consul Jordan to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received July 12.)

(No. 77.)

Sir,

Jeddah, June 19, 1926.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge receipt of your telegram No. 48 of the 16th instant and to confirm my urgent telegram No. 66 of the 18th instant, relative to the contemplated reservation of the Hejaz delegate to the Sanitary Conference, Paris, regarding Akaba and Ma'an.

2. I enclose herewith a copy of the letter addressed to Ibn Saud in pursuance of your telegram above quoted, together with a copy of his telegraphic reply from the final paragraph of which it would appear as if he intends to keep the question open for further discussion, as there is no claim in the letter addressed to him that Sir Gilbert Clayton did ever conduct negotiations on this question.

I have, &c.

S. R. JORDAN.

Enclosure 1 in No. 5.

Copy of Letter from the Acting British Agent and Consul, Jeddah, to His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd, Mecca, dated June 17, 1926.

(After respects.)

I HAVE the honour to inform your Majesty that I have received a telegraphic communication from His Britannic Majesty's Government, who state that your Majesty's representative at Paris is contemplating putting a reservation in the

* Not printed.

proposed Sanitary Convention regarding Ma'an and Akaba. I understand that your Majesty's representative has telegraphed to your Majesty for instructions on this point, and I have been instructed by His Britannic Majesty's Government to inform your Majesty that it would be most unfortunate for the political relations of our respective countries were your Majesty's delegate to reopen by this means a question regarding which Sir Gilbert Clayton communicated the decision of His Britannic Majesty's Government to your Majesty some nine months ago.

In this connection I would particularly invite your Majesty's attention to Sir Gilbert Clayton's statement as recorded on p. 16 of the printed report of his negotiations with your Majesty, and also to your Majesty's despatches of the 24th Dhu'l Qadah, 1343, the 26.1.1344, and a letter dated the 21st October, 1924, from the Political Agent at Bahrain.

As the purposes of the Sanitary Conference at Paris are purely humanitarian and have neither political nor religious significance, I venture to hope that your Majesty will not cause any instructions to be issued to your Majesty's representative which might detract from the noble purposes of that assembly, or which might in any way affect the great and firm friendship existing between your Majesty and His Britannic Majesty's Government.

(Compliments.)

Enclosure 2 in No. 5.

Translation of Telegram from His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd, Mecca, to the Acting British Agent and Consul, Jeddah, dated 7.12.1344 (June 18, 1926).

IN reply to your letter No. 406, we did not instruct our delegate to speak about such question, and we have telegraphically directed him not to interfere in anything which does not concern him. No negotiations at all have been made between us and Sir Gilbert Clayton regarding Akaba and Ma'an.

[E 4186/20/91]

No. 6.

Vice-Consul Jordan to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received July 12.)

(No. 79.)

Sir,

Jeddah, June 23, 1926.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a report on the Moslem Conference being held in Mecca and which has been adjourned temporarily to allow the delegates to perform their religious duties at Arafat and Mina.

2. As the Hejaz Government seem to have obtained the results hoped for from the conference, it, at the moment, seems improbable that the delegates will foregather after the Haj to discuss any further business, and, in view of the interest being taken in the conference by the Moslem world in general, I take the opportunity of forwarding this report at once and will send a supplementary report at a later date if it becomes necessary.

3. Copies of this despatch and of its enclosure are being sent to India, Singapore, Egypt, Jerusalem, Khartum and Bagdad.

I have, &c.

S. R. JORDAN.

Enclosure in No. 6.

Report on the Mecca Moslem Conference.

THE conference which was originally to have met on the 1st June did not eventually meet until the morning of the 7th June, after three postponements. These were primarily due to the fact that the Hejaz Government, or, properly speaking, Ibn Saud's party, had not been able to secure the adherence of the greater number of the delegates to their schemes for promoting the success of the conference and the carrying through of the proposals of that party.

2. For some time previous to the original date of the conference until late on the evening of the 6th instant, there had been great activity and considerable

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excitement amongst the delegates, the most recalcitrant of whom appeared to be the Indian Khilafists under Mohammed and Shaukat Ali, and Maulvi Suleiman Nadvi, the president of the Indian Khilafat Committee.

3. After an attempt by Maulvi Sanaullah, an Indian of Amritsar, of Wahabi persuasion, on the night of the 5th to secure the Ali brothers' co-operation had failed, a private meeting was called in the house of one Abu Azaim, the president of the Egyptian Khilafists, and after a very heated discussion the Indian Khilafists agreed to support the Hejaz party on questions relating to the unity of Islam, and the means to procure this, the improvements in the Hejaz and greater transport facilities to guarantee the comfort and well-being of the pilgrims.

4. Upon this the invitation cards were issued at midnight on the 6th instant, and the conference was called for next morning, the 7th June, at 8 o'clock.

5. Before proceeding with the report of the conference it would be as well perhaps to give some idea of the machinations that were going on in Mecca prior to the actual date of the conference.

6. The Hejaz authorities gave all the delegates to understand most distinctly both verbally and through the medium of the Mecca newspaper "Umm-al-Kura," that the conference had been called to discuss matters relating to improvements in the Hejaz to secure the comfort and well-being of the pilgrims. No discussions of a political or religious nature would be tolerated, neither would any interference in the internal affairs of the Hejaz. This step was rendered very necessary by Ibn Saud's relations with us and also in order to prevent his actions in the matter of the destruction of the various tombs and shrines within the Haramain being called into question, together with his reasons for declaring himself King of the Hejaz after his many declarations to the effect that the Hejaz was for the Hejazi and the Moslem world, and words to that effect.

7. These declarations, however, did not prevent many of the persons present in Mecca, amongst whom the Ali brothers were perhaps most prominent, putting questions of this nature to Ibn Saud at the various receptions held by him prior to the conference. On one occasion Mohammed Ali pointed out to Ibn Saud that he could never have conquered the Hejaz had it not been for the help he received from India, to which Ibn Saud replied: "I won the Hejaz by the sword." Mohammed Ali replied: "Yes, but with money we shall take it from you." The King became very angry at these words, and, I understand, left the room.

8. Prior to the conference, also, and in connection therewith, there had been a great deal of talk and argument about the "Unity of the East." "Rablal-el-Sharkieh" and, as far as can be ascertained, many of the delegates were in favour of such a movement, but it seemed too big for any one of them to undertake. There seems but little doubt that the idea is being exploited by the Bolshevik elements in Mecca, and that it has gained such grounds is counted a victory for the Bolshevik propagandists in Mecca, who apparently are local Bokharans and Afghans. But, against this, such a responsible person as Suleiman Nadvi, the president of the Indian Khilafat Committee, stated quite openly to a prominent Indian resident of Mecca, that co-operation between India and the Wahabi was not possible under the present circumstances, on religious as well as many other grounds, as no Indian could accept either their doctrines or what amounted to their ignorance. He added, however, that Ibn Saud could be a most useful man to the Indians, as he had great ambitions, and is an even greater enemy to Great Britain than the late King Hussein, and that, if he were not so fanatical in religious matters, there would be a real opportunity of the Unity of Islam, but that he (Ibn Saud) had his own ideas, and is counting on the support of the other Moslem countries and desires to use the Bolsheviks as the Turks used them to secure their freedom.

9. The Javanese delegation supported Ibn Saud throughout, as did Abu Azaim, the head of the Egyptian Khilafists, and the Syrian and Palestinian delegates.

10. The various arguments and discussions carried on prior to the conference on the methods and doctrines of the Wahabis by the ulama of the various Moslem countries who happened to be on the pilgrimage are not directly connected with the conference and will figure in my monthly and pilgrimage reports.

11. The number of representatives present at the conference was fifty-nine divided as follows:—

Indian Khilafat Society—

El Sayed Suleiman-el-Nadvi (chief).
Mohammed Ali, Shaukat Ali and Shuaib Qurashi (members).

Indian Ulama Society—

Mohammed Kefaiat Ullah (chief).
Ahmed Said, Abdul Haleem-el-Sadiqui and Shubeir Ahmed Osman (members).

Indian Hadith Society—

Sheikh Thanaa Ullah (chief).
Sheikh Hamid Ullah, Sheikh Abdul Wahid Ghaznani and Sheikh Ismail Ghaznani (members).

Egyptian Khilafat Society—

Sayed Mohammed Madi Abu-el-Azaim (chief).
Sayed Kamel Osman-el-Ghandi (member).

Ulamas of Egypt—

Sheikh Abdul Salam Haikal, Sheikh Abdul Zaher Abu-el-Samh and Mahmoud Ali Mansur.

From Java—

Mohammed Said Tjokorominato (chief).
Haji Mansur, Sheikh Mohammed Baqer and Sheikh Janan Tayeb (members).

Javanese Irshad Society—

Sheikh Omar Naji (chief).
Sheikh Mohammed-bin-Taleb (member).

Palestinian Delegation—

Haji Amin Effendi El Hussein (chief).
Sheikh Ismail Effendi El Hafez and Agag Effendi Noweihid (members).

Beirut Society—

Abdul Ghani Effendi El Kaaki and Hassan Effendi El Macchi.

From Syria—

Sheikh Bahget-el-Bitar and Sheikh Manh Haroun.

From the Sudan—

Sheikh Abu-el-Qasem Amin and Sheikh Ibrahim Madathir.

Nejd Delegation—

Sheikh Abdullah-bin-Bileihed (chief).
Sheikh Hafez Wahba, Dr. Abdullah Damluji, Sheikh Ahmed-el-Khatib and Yusuf Yassin (members).

Hejaz Delegation—

Sherif Sharaf Adnan (chief).
Sherif Hazzaa Abu-el-Batin, Sherif Ali-bin-el-Hussein-el-Harthi, Abdullah-el-Sheibi, Abdullah-el-Fadhl, Suleiman Qabel, Saud Disheisha, Aaref-el-Ahmadi, Ismail-bin-Meheirik, Mohammed Nasif, Bakhit-bin-Benyan, Ibrahim Aayeg and Mohammed-el-Mugeirbi (members).

Asir Delegation—

Tawfiq-el-Sharif, Mohammed Abu Zeid and Abdul Aziz-el-Mteiqi.

Russian and Turkistan Moslem Delegation—

Ziaeddin-bin-Qawameddin (chief).
Musleheddin-bin-Khalil, Abdul Wahid-bin-Abdul Raouf, Mahdi-bin-Maqsoud, Abdul Rahman-bin-Ismail and Taher Elias (members).

12. The setting for the conference, which was held in a building known as the Ashlaq building, not far from the old Turkish fort overlooking Mecca, was in no way elaborate. The conference was held in a large elongated room on the first floor of the building, and the conference tables were two large horse-shoe shapes with the ends converging on the centre of the room. Behind and around these two tables were a number of chairs for newspaper people and visitors who had been fortunate enough to secure tickets of admission. In the centre of one side of the room a large dais had been erected for the president, and on this structure sat Ibn Saud whilst

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Sheikh Hafez Wahba read out his inaugural speech. All the decorations, i.e., curtains and table-covers, were in green, the Nejd and Islamic colour.

13. The first delegates gathered at 1 o'clock Arabic time, equal to 7 o'clock European time, and by 7.30 the majority were in their places. Then Ibn Saud entered, and a salute of twenty-one guns was fired from the fort near by. The explosions were so loud and so shook the building that several delegates became panicky and left the building, fearing it was about to collapse.

14. After the salute, Ibn Saud mounted the dais and, turning right and left, saluted the delegates with the Moslem greeting: "Salaam alaikum!" "Peace be upon you!" Sheikh Hafez Wahba then proceeded to read His Majesty's inaugural address, he also standing on the presidential dais.

15. In his speech, the King said that this was the first gathering of its kind ever held, and he thought that the reason was to be found in the fact that previously there had never existed, properly speaking, any Moslem public opinion, but that now things have changed, and hence the necessity for this assembly here. In continuation, he drew the attention of the delegates to the misgovernment of his predecessors, the Shereefian régime, complaining bitterly of Hussein and cursing Ali, because, he added: "I have in my possession certain documents captured from Ali which proves that he sold the Hejaz to foreigners." (Note.—He omitted to say how much the foreigners paid for it, in view of Ali's pecuniary embarrassment during the latter part, and indeed the whole, of his short reign.) Continuing, Ibn Saud then started to praise the present régime, pointing to the safety of the roads, the decreased fees chargeable to pilgrims, and many other things of a minor nature. He concluded by stating that the conference was now open to discuss matters, but "do not consider or discuss questions of our domestic politics or any matters of religious controversial nature." This limited the scope of the conference considerably, and at this there were, I am told, several murmurings in the room.

16. The reading of his address ending, His Majesty left the room, and the conference then nominated a certain Maulvi Abdul Wahid Ghaznani (already referred to) as chairman until a president was elected, as he appeared about the eldest and most venerable amongst them, and was, in addition, a fanatical Wahabi. As soon as he mounted the presidential dais, he thanked the delegates for the honour conferred upon him and harangued them for some time, drawing their attention particularly to the fact that they were the chosen of Allah to be given the honour of sitting in such an auspicious Moslem gathering.

17. On resuming his seat, somewhat fatigued by his oratorical effort, Sheikh Hafez Wahba, in whose name the conference had been convened, moved that the conference should proceed to elect a president. Upon this, Mohammed Ali, of the Indian delegates, jumped to his feet and proposed that the head of the Turkish delegation (Edib Servet Bey, who, by the way, did not arrive in time for the conference) should be elected president of this assembly, "for," he said, "the Arabs and the Turks parted company in Mecca some years ago, and now, as sign of goodwill and friendship, let them renew their friendship in this holy city. Also, the Turks had more right than any other nation to preside over this august assembly, as they are the only free Moslem nation in the world, not being ground down by the heel of any despotic foreign Power (adding with a forced tear), like we poor Indian Moslems." The chairman, thinking, perhaps, that Mohammed Ali's eloquent appeal, which, by the way, was rendered in English and afterwards translated into Arabic, might interfere with the prearranged plans of the conference, rose and protested most vehemently against the suggestion, which, he said, was based upon nothing other than a desire for advertisement and self-aggrandisement on the part of the proposer, and that the only person who could rightly be president of this great reunion of Moslem forces was the King of the Hejaz, Abdul Aziz. The mention of the word "King," coupled with the insults to the Ali brothers, caused something in the way of an uproar, and as the chairman was completely exhausted after this, his second, oratorical effort, Hafez Wahba had to take the situation in hand, and, after quietness had been established, explained that voting on the suggestions of persons or on any particular persons was not in accordance with the Sharia, as it implied favouritism and was prejudicial to persons not proposed; consequently there would be no proposals, but each delegate would be given a slip of paper on which he should write the name of his choice.

This was done, and the scrutineers announced the result as follows. Sherif Adnan, forty-four votes, is elected president. The Turks were accorded nine votes and Hafez Wahba one, three to Abu Azaim and two blanks. There was a further uproar on the part of the Ali brothers and their supporters, who demanded a recount

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of the papers, as this Sherif Adnan was a practical nonentity. This was refused, and eventually, after much pacification all round, Adnan took his presidential seat.

18. The delegates then proceeded with the election of vice-presidents, and in the same way according to plan Suleiman Nadvi, president of the Indian Khilafat Committee, and Ziaeddin-bin-Kawameddin, head of the Soviet Moslems, were elected with thirty-two and twenty votes respectively, with seven blanks.

19. The Ali brothers thereupon questioned the credentials of the various delegates. Hafez Wahba replied that they had all been examined and found correct. The reason of this manoeuvre on the part of the Ali brothers was not at first apparent till the election of a general secretary was announced and it was discovered that a certain Mohammed Tawfik-el-Sharif, a representative of the Asir, was the Ibn Saud party's nominee. The Ali brothers contended that there were no representatives from the Asir and none had been appointed, and that this was packing the conference to secure the balance of votes. This, though true, was naturally hotly repudiated by Hafez Wahba, and eventually the secret voting gave Mohammed Tawfik the majority over Agag Noweihid, secretary of the Palestinian delegation. Thirty-two votes were for the former and twenty-three for the latter, with four blanks.

20. After these proceedings, a subject committee was appointed to draw up an agenda for the conference. This committee consisted of one or two delegates from each country and included Shaukat Ali and Kefaiat Ullah as Indian representatives.

21. The day following the first inaugural of the conference and the election of the Bolshevik representative as vice-president, I received a visit from the Governor of Jeddah, who, after a rather lengthy preamble on the weather and the conditions of the pilgrims, informed me that the Soviet delegation was a purely religious party and in no way concerned with the dissemination of Bolshevik propaganda. That he had had to go on board to meet them and was very impressed by their gentleness and good behaviour. He even went so far as to offer to supply me with their names, but as these were already in my possession there seemed no need to put him to the trouble. There is no doubt whatever in my mind that he was instructed by the King from Mecca to take this step, and it was in consequence of the election of the Soviet delegate to the vice-presidency that forced his hand. Whether the election was engineered by the local authorities to intimidate other foreign Powers with the fact that Soviet was always at their beck and call in case of necessity, or whether it was the choice of the fanatical firebrands of which the conference was composed is a matter for conjecture, but in view of the fact that only the two persons actually elected obtained votes, it would appear to have been deliberately engineered. Again, it may have been done by the Ibn Saud party as a sop to the other delegates in order to refute any statement accusing him of being in league with Great Britain or any other foreign Power, and to obtain greater support from them for his schemes for the improvement of the Hejaz. Either way it caused mild excitement, both in Mecca and Jeddah and, as only this agency received the honour of the kaimakam's visit, it would appear as if Ibn Saud thought the other foreign representatives not worth considering.

22. It appears unnecessary to go into the details of all the measures that have been passed at the conference, and I have given a rather lengthy description of the election of the office bearers as an indication and guide to what happened at practically every session of the conference.

23. Briefly, the results of the conference to date may be summed up as follows:—

- (1.) The conference to be held annually in Mecca.
- (2.) Allocation of delegates for the future to be : India four, Hejaz and Turkey, China, Java and Sumatra three each, and other Moslem Powers two each.
- (3.) Each delegate has to pay the sum of £300 for the expenses of the conference.
- (4.) All funds of the Evka'ul-Haramain all over the world to be remitted to the Hejaz, to be expended in improving the country for the greater comfort of the pilgrims and facilitating their transport.
- (5.) Require the Hejaz Railway from the French and British, as such is the property of the world's Moslems, and, if it is not handed back, to petition the League of Nations for justice in this respect.

With reference to (1), Mohammed Ali and his brother Shaukat moved an amendment that the conference should be held in different countries each year, as it may not be practicable to hold it always in the Hejaz. In case of war, for example, when

he added "he was sure that there was a Government who would stop the meeting of the delegates of the Islam world and its unity if possible, and you know it, gentlemen, and I know it, and that Government, gentlemen, is the Government of Great Britain, our greatest enemy, who has down-trodden India and Egypt and many other Moslems all over the world." This burst of rhetoric was received in silence, and the amendment lapsed for want of a seconder.

(2) and (3) explain themselves, but (3) may mean fewer delegates at the conference in future.

(4). This is a very big question and it is said that the Evkaf funds in the world amount to not less than 10 millions sterling per annum and perhaps considerably more. Should this money, or even half of it, find its way into the Hejaz yearly there will be a great opening for large engineering enterprises, as it has been approved by the delegates that, besides the Hejaz Railway being opened up and used as soon as possible, new lines should be constructed between Medina and Mecca and Mecca and Jeddah. Also grandiose projects are flying around for water conservation schemes, not only for Mecca itself, but also to provide sufficient for irrigation purposes. Then there is the development of the ports of Jeddah and Yambo, a motion in favour of Rabigh instead of Jeddah falling through.

These and many others may become possible should the Evkaf funds be collected in the various countries and spent rationally in the Hejaz, but, as honesty and money cannot get along together in this and most other Moslem countries optimism in respect of the early advancement of these projects would appear to be sadly misplaced.

(5) Is also self-explanatory.

24. In addition to the above, many other motions were moved and amendments put forward which were either ruled out on the ground of infringement on domestic politics or controversial matters of a religious nature, or, further, because, according to the ideas of the Hejaz Government, it was not politic that they should be voted upon and an opinion expressed thereon by the conference.

25. The two most important of these latter were, perhaps, (1) the question of the freedom of the whole of the Arab peninsula, and (2) the question of foreign representatives in the Hejaz. On the former the Ali brothers spoke at length and declared that the whole of the Arabian peninsula should be freed of foreign influence and they undertook to secure the evacuation of Aden by the British. Where the peninsula begun and ended was not clear from his speech, but several Syrian hotheads included Syria and Palestine in this general term. Whether the question was ever put to the vote or the original motion was lost in a maze of amendments is not clear, but after some discussion the Ali brothers got up and walked out of the conference requesting that their names should be struck off the list of delegates.

26. The question of foreign representation also received a certain amount of consideration, and the idea in the form of a motion was that foreign nations would only be allowed Moslem representatives in Arabia. As, said Mohammed Ali, prior to his exit from the conference, Great Britain can find Moslem Indians to be Governors of provinces, and leaders of the Assemblies, can she not find one to represent her in the Hejaz instead of polluting this holy land with the presence of a Christian.

This motion was also dropped, though I am informed that the matter received a great deal of attention and had many supporters, and, in this connection, it is worthy of note that neither the Indian nor Malay pilgrimage officers attached to this Agency, nor the Moslem Dutch vice-consul in Mecca, were allowed to attend any of the sessions of the conference.

27. Some seven days after the conference had begun its labours there arrived in Jeddah and proceeded to Mecca a certain Sheikh Hussein-bin-Abdul Qader, who is supposed to be a cousin of the Imam of Yemen and presently Governor of Hodeidah. He brought some twenty armed retainers with him and a number of slaves, and is, I am informed, behaving in a most kingly fashion in Mecca. His arrival as the Yemen delegate to the conference was rather belated, but his presence in Mecca lends itself to many and various conjectures. From a reliable source I learn that he has been approached by certain influential persons, both in Jeddah and Mecca, who promise him their support to the Imam in the event of an attack on the Hejaz. His actions to date appear inoffensive, but it seems improbable that a Governor of a coastal town in Arabia would travel with twenty or more armed retainers and make so much show for the pleasure of proceeding to Mecca ostensibly

to take part in a conference for which he might easily have been too late. When walking in the streets of Mecca he is always escorted by four armed retainers and a slave carrying his heavy gold sword. I hope to be able to report further upon him after his departure from the Hejaz.

General Impression.

28. The general impression left by the reports I have received to date is that a very cleverly organised conference has been carried through successfully and the Saudist régime would appear to have been strengthened considerably by the actions and votings of the delegates, who, outside the conference hall, objected to their presence in the Hejaz.

29. Should even a small part of the Evkaf-ul-Haramain funds find its way yearly to the Hejaz, it will considerably augment the revenues of the country and enrich the rulers and administrators, and what in future will be claimed as the support of the whole Moslem world will be led forth as a bogey to frighten and intimidate all Powers having dealings with the Hejaz hereafter should the Hejazis find it to their advantage to do so.

30. It has been a game of finance and consolidation, and both of these goals appeared to have been reached by the resolutions passed.

31. Altogether the success of a clever Arab community over a pack of political firebrands.

S. R. JORDAN.

[E 4319/1426/91]

No. 7.

Vice-Consul Jordan to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received July 19.)

(No. 82. Secret.)

Sir,

Jeddah, July 3, 1926.

I HAVE the honour to enclose herewith a report on the activities of the Soviet delegation to the Moslem Conference in Mecca as far as I have been able to ascertain to date.

2. I am indebted for the greater part of this information to the Indian and Malayan pilgrimage officers and a certain Mr. Ikbāl Ali Shah, until recently editor of the "Spectator," of Delhi.

3. This latter also succeeded, in his capacity as editor of the above newspaper, to attend several meetings of the conference prior to the Haj, and was good enough to give me some of the details which figured in my report forwarded under cover of this agency's despatch No. 79 of the 23rd June last.

4. Copies of this despatch and of its enclosures are being sent to India, Jerusalem, Bagdad, Singapore, Cairo and Khartum.

I have, &c.

S. R. JORDAN.

Enclosure in No. 7.

Report on the Activities of the Soviet Delegates to the Moslem Conference held in Mecca, June 1926.

THIS delegation, consisting of six members under the leadership of one Ziaeddin-bin-Qawameddin, with Musheheddin-bin-Halil, Abdul Wahid-bin-Abdul Raouf, Mahdi-bin-Maqsood, Abdul Rahman-bin-Ismail, and Taher Elias as the other five members, were known officially at the conference as the Russian and Turkestan delegation.

2. Their conduct during the proceedings of the conference was exemplary, and they unfailingly supported the Saudists throughout the proceedings. They seldom gave voice to their views on any particular question, and restricted themselves to voting with the Hejaz party.

3. Outside the conference they were more active, and their house was always open to receive the many guests that presented themselves thereat.

4. The Ali brothers and the majority of the other delegates visited them on various occasions, and the Java representatives, Mohammed Said Tjokorominato, Haji Mansur and Jeran Taib, were constant visitors.

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5. A certain Afghan who visited them at the instigation of this agency, and afterwards related the ensuing conversation to me, stated that the leader was an expert propagandist from Turkestan and a clever man.

6. My informant, who was dressed as an Afghan and pretended to be in search of the truth of the Soviet doctrines, discussed with them at some length, and, after a slow beginning, they enlarged upon their hopes in the Hejaz and all Moslem countries in general.

7. When asked why they preferred Bolshevism to their own laws and doctrines, the leader replied that the Emir of Turkestan was a despot and treated them badly, but that since the advent of Bolshevism there was at least some security and order in their country. As an example, he said that, if the Emir wanted to give a picnic for any of his friends or family, he commandeered all he required from right and left without paying for it and without taking the trouble to return it.

8. After further discussion, the leader stated that there seemed little hope for the present of establishing Bolshevik principles in the Hejaz, as the country was but sparsely populated and the people mostly ignorant and ill-fitted to assimilate the advanced Sovietic ideas.

9. With regard to India, they stated that that country was already thoroughly organised and worked from the central organisation in Bokharistan, but that, whilst they experienced no difficulty in getting at the poorer classes, they had not been able up till the present to capture the more intellectual minds.

10. In the Federated Malay States and Dutch East Indies, he said, they realised that there was a great field ready to receive their principles, and that they were now about to concentrate on that part of the world. They had had few opportunities or facilities for spreading propaganda in these States in the past, but now, however, the Hejaz offered an excellent means to this end and would be used to the fullest extent, as, although they could not do much in the Hejaz itself, they, nevertheless, had here, during the pilgrimage, facilities for coming into contact with some of the most influential persons in the Moslem world, and by this means they hoped to be able to reach the minds of people who in their own country would be almost unapproachable. Thus, they hoped to influence these people whilst in the Hejaz and so have their (Soviet) principles carried back by them to their respective countries.

11. In this respect I should add that Shaukat Ali declared openly in Mecca that, though little had been gained by the conference, yet a great and useful work had been done for Islam in Mecca this year, and that was that the unity of Islam had at last been accomplished and the help of the Soviet Moslems and nation assured.

12. Referring to the Sudan, they stated that there also the folk were as yet too ignorant as a whole, but that they never lose an opportunity of approaching the more intellectual.

13. It is a fact that during the whole of the present Haj season the Bolshevik delegation has been endeavouring to captivate the fancy of the leading spirits at the conference, and they have spent little or no effort amongst the lower classes of pilgrims. To date, not a single pilgrim approached by members of this agency staff has been able to assert that they had been subjected to any form of Bolshevik propaganda, and this fact brings home to one how the Soviet intend to use this Moslem Conference for the propagation of their doctrines in future.

14. The election of the Soviet delegate as Vice-President of the Conference and the visit of the Kaimakam of Jeddah to this office, as reported in my despatch No. 79 of the 23rd June last, coupled with the several visits in quick succession of the Soviet agent and consul-general to Mecca to interview Ibn Saud just prior to the conference, together with the refusal of the Bolshevik delegates to take part in the Cairo Conference, would serve to show that they are making a determined effort to spread their ideas to the countries represented at the conference through the various delegates and to secure the support of Ibn Saud.

15. They have never lost an opportunity of holding up the great successes of Turkey as an example of pure Bolshevik philanthropy, in which they gave money and ammunitions and received absolutely nothing in exchange.

16. And what they did for Turkey they are prepared to do for any other down-trodden nation in the world. This statement has naturally captivated the fancy of many and been a great asset in propaganda.

17. Ibn Saud, whilst receiving them in a very friendly spirit and listening to their blandishments, would for the moment appear to be running with the hare and the hounds.

18. A further representative of the Soviet Union arrived three days after the completion of the Haj and complained most bitterly of the difficulties he encountered in Egypt and which prevented him from arriving in the Hejaz in time to make the pilgrimage. His name I have not been able to ascertain to date.

S. R. JORDAN.

[E 4349/710/91]

No. 8.

The Marquess of Crewe to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received July 21.)

(No. 1338.)

Sir,

Paris, July 20, 1926.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 1201 of the 29th June respecting the export of arms and ammunition to the rulers of the Arabian peninsula, I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of the reply of the French Government to my representations to them on this subject.

2. You will observe that the French Government, in view of the present political conditions in Arabia, is not prepared to modify its present attitude with regard to the export of arms and ammunition to the peninsula.

3. I shall be glad to have your instructions as to whether I should make any further representations to the French Government in this matter.

I have, &c.

CREWE.

Enclosure in No. 8.

French Ministry for Foreign Affairs to the Marquess of Crewe.

M. l'Ambassadeur,

Paris, le 17 juillet 1926.

PAR une lettre en date du 29 juin dernier, le Chargé d'Affaires de Grande-Bretagne avait bien voulu me faire connaître que le Gouvernement britannique, prenant en considération les relations amicales existant aujourd'hui entre le Sultan Ibn Séoud et les Gouvernements de l'Irak et de la Transjordanie, estimait n'avoir plus de raison désormais de s'opposer à la reprise du commerce d'exportation des armes en Arabie, étant entendu que ce commerce devrait se maintenir dans les limites fixées par la convention de 1919 sur le trafic des armes, et que, d'autre part, l'Imam Yahya ne serait pas admis à en bénéficier aussi longtemps qu'il persisterait à occuper une partie du territoire du protectorat d'Aden.

Lorsque votre Excellence avait exposé à mon prédécesseur, par une communication datée du 1^{er} décembre 1924, les raisons pour lesquelles le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté britannique jugeait opportun de suspendre l'octroi des licences d'exportation d'armes à destination du Hedjaz, le Gouvernement de la République avait aussitôt pris, en ce qui le concernait, une mesure analogue. Le 28 avril 1925, une seconde lettre de votre Excellence me faisait part de l'intention du Gouvernement britannique d'étendre au Yémen et à l'Assir le principe de l'interdiction qui frappait déjà le commerce des armes avec le Hedjaz; j'avais assuré votre Excellence, le 9 mai suivant, de l'adhésion du Gouvernement de la République à cette nouvelle décision, par laquelle le trafic des armes se trouvait pratiquement prohibé avec l'ensemble de la péninsule arabique.

J'ai l'honneur de faire savoir à votre Excellence que le Gouvernement de la République, tout en appréciant les efforts déployés par le Sultan Ibn Séoud en vue de rétablir l'ordre et la paix dans la partie de l'Arabie soumise à son autorité, estime que les arguments invoqués par le Gouvernement britannique lui-même au mois de décembre 1924 n'ont rien perdu de leur valeur, et que les conditions politiques présentes de l'Arabie n'offrent pas encore toutes les garanties requises par la Convention de Saint-Germain du 10 septembre 1919, non plus que celles également visées par la convention de Genève de 1926 déjà ratifiée par le Gouvernement français. Dans ces conditions, le Gouvernement de la République ne croit pas opportun de modifier la ligne de conduite précisément adoptée à la demande du Gouvernement britannique, en ce qui concerne le commerce des armes en Arabie.

Veillez, &c.

(Pour le Président du Conseil, Ministre des Affaires étrangères, et par délégation l'Ambassadeur de France, Secrétaire général),

BERTHELOT.

[E 4400/80/91]

No. 9.

*M. van Swinderen to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received July 24.)**Légation des Pays-Bas, Londres,
le 22 juillet 1926.*

M. le Secrétaire d'État,

CONFORMÉMENT à l'article 14 de l'arrangement, avec protocole, concernant le contrôle sanitaire à exercer sur l'île de Camaran sur les pèlerins de La Mecque, signé à Paris le 19 juin dernier, j'ai l'honneur, d'ordre de mon Gouvernement, de porter à la connaissance de votre Excellence que le Gouvernement de la Reine confirme l'arrangement susmentionné.

Veuillez, &c.

R. DE MAREES VAN SWINDEREN.

[E 4434/367/91]

No. 10.

Vice-Consul Jordan to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received July 26.)

(No. 83. Secret.)

Sir,

Jeddah, July 5. 1926.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith my report on the situation in the Hejaz during the period the 1st to the 30th June, 1926.

2. Copies of this report are being sent to Egypt, Jerusalem (2), Bagdad, Aden, Simla, Beirut (for Damascus), Khartum (through Port Sudan) and Singapore.

I have, &c.

S. R. JORDAN.

Enclosure in No. 10.

Reports on Events in the Hejaz for the Period, June 1-30, 1926

(Secret.)

THE period under report, on account of the pilgrimage and Moslem Conference in Mecca, has been unusually interesting.

2. The pilgrimage has passed off without any serious incidents as was at first feared, with the exception of the attack on the Mahmal, and it is calculated that there were not less than 100,000 persons at Arafat on the 20th June last, the first day of the Haj.

3. Of this number approximately 58,000 came from overseas, and the remainder was made up of Hejazis and Nejdis. Despite the efforts of Ibn Saud to prevent any great number of his people from making the pilgrimage this year the whole of Arafat was covered with them and their camels, and it is estimated that at least 35,000 to 40,000 persons from Nejd territory were present.

4. The pilgrimage to date has been declared clean, and no cases of cholera or plague have been notified to the Hejaz Health Ministry. Dysentery, malaria, and eye and throat affections were prevalent owing to the glare and dust.

5. I have received many complaints from pilgrims that they were not allowed to perform their religious duties freely and also on account of the destruction of the tombs in and around Mecca.

6. At first pilgrims were not allowed to enter the cemetery where these tombs were situated, but eventually after representations were made to the Sultan by the Indian Pilgrimage Officer and many influential pilgrims the cemetery was opened for several hours daily, but Wahabi police were in attendance to prevent any departure from the puritanical Wahabi beliefs.

7. It appears that most of the tombs have been razed to the ground and the component parts of the edifice scattered abroad, except in the case of the tomb of Khadijah, the Prophet's wife, where, although the tomb has been destroyed, the tiles and marbles forming part of the edifice have been preserved and stacked on one side.

8. It is confidently rumoured that a fetva has been issued authorising the destruction or demolition of the dome over the Prophet's tomb in Medina, and that Ibn Saud is awaiting the departure of the pilgrims before he proceeds with this further act of vandalism.

9. A great number of pilgrims were beaten by the police for smoking and other slight irregularities of the Wahabi creed, but what, perhaps, caused the greatest indignation amongst the orthodox Moslems was the fact that on several occasions the Haram was cleared of pilgrims making the "Tawaf," i.e., the circumambulating of the Kaaba seven times, in order that the Sultan's women and other members of his family, his father included, could perform this duty in comfort. Such procedure has, I believe, never taken place since the time of the Prophet, and caused great indignation.

10. Further, when Ibn Saud approached the Kaaba to kiss the "Black Stone," it was first carefully wiped over with a scented rag. This also, though undoubtedly hygienic, was considered a sacrilege.

11. Great inconvenience was caused to the pilgrims by the fact that, one day before the journey to Arafat, many of the camelmen went away with their camels as they were afraid that there would be a clash between the overseas pilgrims and the Akhwan, and this so reduced the number of animals available that many of the pilgrims were forced to walk or pay an exorbitant sum for camel hire.

12. At Arafat and Mena, and more particularly the latter place, where the pilgrims are supposed to stone the devil, many pedestrians were trampled to death by the camels of the Akhwan, who forced their animals through the crowds to throw a stone at the pillar.

13. The sanitary arrangements were non-existent, and, two days before the pilgrimage, coinciding with the arrival of the bulk of the Nejdis, the Ain Zebaida water supply was blocked, and the pilgrims in Mecca could obtain little or no drinking water, and had to pay as much as 10 piastres for a tin of brackish well water.

14. At Arafat and Mena, where the sacrifice of animals takes place, no arrangements whatever were made to dispose of the carcasses, and after two or three days in the hot sun I am informed, and can well believe, that the stench was awful.

15. Ibn Saud, talking to a representative of the International Quarantine Board, excused himself for the shortcomings of this pilgrimage by stating that they had had no time to make all the arrangements that they should have liked to have made, and that long before next season he was appointing a committee to thoroughly organise the sanitary and other necessary measures to assure the greater comfort and well-being of the pilgrims. Also that the Bedouin, i.e., his own Nejdis, would be prevented from bringing their camels to Arafat and Mena and causing the damage and harm that they have done this year.

16. Another fact which has not in any way added to the reputation of the present régime is that, now that the pilgrims are leaving the Hejaz, and, in contradiction to Ibn Saud's assurances and published list of fees chargeable to pilgrims, a further fee of 33 Egyptian piastres by way of quarantine tax is being charged.

17. A telegraphic protest against this fee being charged, addressed to the King personally by me some days ago, has been ignored to date, and the fee is still being charged and collected by the mutawwifs.

18. The incident of the Mahmal merely goes to show how essentially uncivilised the Arab of the interior of Arabia really is.

19. The Mahmal, with escort, left Mecca on the afternoon of the 19th June, to proceed to Arafat and at about half past seven in the evening, during a temporary halt a crowd of Akhwan gathered around and, using insulting language to the Emir-ul-Haj and the escort of the Mahmal, began to throw stones at the Mahmal itself and the escort. It was only after the attitude of the Akhwan became threatening that the Emir-ul-Haj formed up his escort and, after several shots had been fired by the Bedouin, that he ordered his people to fire. It is estimated that at least thirty people were killed, including seven sheikhs of the Akhwan.

20. The fortuitous arrival of Ibn Saud on the scene calmed down both parties and what might easily have degenerated into a general massacre was thereby avoided.

21. The Mahmal proceeded to Arafat and completed the Haj, but it has now been decided that it will return direct to Egypt and not proceed to Medina, as was at first intended.

22. The Moslem Conference, which is being held in Mecca, has been the scene of many fierce arguments and personal recriminations, but, as the Hejaz, by careful packing of the conference, was assured of a majority before the conference sat, they have secured their main aims.

23. The conference commenced on the 7th June and adjourned on the 17th June to allow the delegates to make the Haj. It was at first thought that, as the Hejaz Government had passed all their main resolutions, the possibility of the conference meeting after the Haj was remote, but the arrival of the Turkish and Egyptian delegates some two days after the completion of the ceremonies at Arafat and Mena obliged the conference to meet again.

The measures passed to date are as follows:—

- (1.) The conference to be held annually in Mecca.
- (2.) Allocation of delegates for the future to be: India, 4; Hejaz and Turkey, China, Java and Sumatra, 3 each; and other Moslem Powers, 2 each.
- (3.) Each delegate has to pay the sum of £300 for the expenses of the conference.
- (4.) All funds of the Evkaf-ul-Haramain all over the world to be remitted to the Hejaz to be expended in improving the country for the greater comfort of the pilgrims and facilitating their transport.
- (5.) Require the Hejaz Railway from the French and British as such is the property of the world's Moslems, and if it is not handed back to petition the League of Nations for justice in this respect.

24. The capitulatory rights of foreigners in the Hejaz were again called into question by the Governor of Jeddah, who arrested and imprisoned a British Indian subject for beating a doorkeeper of the shipping office of Zeinal Ali Reza, agents for the Turner, Morrison line of steamers.

25. As Zeinal Ali Reza and the Governor of Jeddah are one and the same person, no doubt a little personal animosity crept into the question and prevented an unprejudiced handling of the matter in his capacity as Governor. But after he had refused to have the matter settled amicably, and also after he had refused my official demand to hand the man over to me, I was forced to telephone to His Majesty in Mecca, who, after demurring for some time, ordered the Kaimakam to hand the man over to this Agency at once.

26. Politically, the situation appears to be quiet. Relations with the Yemen appear to be as formerly, though it is significant that a Moslem member of the staff of this Agency was sitting with a party of Yemenese pilgrims at Arafat and they informed him quite openly that they were coming soon to drive these Wahabi dogs back into the desert.

27. The Yemen representative at the conference arrived in Jeddah with some twenty armed retainers and a number of slaves, and is accompanied by several of each wherever he goes. It is rumoured that he has been promised the support of many of the notables of Jeddah and Mecca in case of an attack on the Hejaz.

28. What repercussions the Mahmal incident may have on the relations between Egypt and Ibn Saud is not at present evident, but, no doubt, it will blow over in due course.

29. The motor *concessionnaires* are very dissatisfied with their venture, and are losing money; according to the manager, an Egyptian.

30. There is considerably more demand for places in their cars than they can possibly cope with, but, owing to the state of the road between Jeddah and Mecca and the bad driving of the local chauffeurs, the repair bill is running away with not only their profits, but also a great deal of their gross takings. Some of the cars are already out of commission, and the company is thinking of cutting its losses and selling out immediately they have made as much as possible out of the pilgrimage.

31. The Italian consul, M. A. Fares, has been replaced in Jeddah by M. Cesana, a professor of medicine, who runs a dispensary in addition to his consular functions.

32. M. Fares proceeded to Massawa by an Italian steamer to see the Governor of Eritrea, and is afterwards proceeding to Italy to join his wife. As M. Fares is well over 60 years of age it would appear improbable that he will return to Arabia after the completion of his leave to take up a post at Hodeidah.

33. One slave has been repatriated during the period under report.

S. R. JORDAN.

[E 4675/3702/65]

No. 11.

Vice-Consul Jordan to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received August 9.)

(No. 84.)

Sir,

Jeddah, July 12, 1926.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge Foreign Office telegram No. 50 of the 4th instant, and to forward herewith copy of the letter I addressed to His Majesty the King of the Hejaz in pursuance thereof, together with a copy of his reply thereto.

I have, &c.

S. R. JORDAN.

Enclosure 1 in No. 11.

Copy of Letter from the Acting British Agent and Consul, Jeddah, to His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd, Mecca, dated July 6, 1926.

(After respects.)

I HAVE the honour to inform your Majesty that I have been directed by His Britannic Majesty's Government to acquaint your Majesty with the fact that Feisal, the King of Iraq, has been obliged to leave Iraq and proceed to Europe for reasons of health. During His Majesty's absence, arrangements have been made for His Majesty's brother, Ali, the ex-King of the Hejaz, to act as Regent.

The nomination of Ali as Regent will in no way alter the policy of friendship which the Iraq Government have towards your Majesty, and the Emir Ali has intimated to His Majesty's Government that he desires to forget all past differences in respect of the Hejaz and Nejd and to act as Regent during his brother's absence solely in the best interests of Mesopotamia.

(Compliments.)

Enclosure 2 in No. 11.

Translation of Letter from Abdul Aziz-bin-Abdul Rahman-al-Faisal-al-Saud, Mecca, to the Acting British Agent and Consul, Jeddah, dated 28th Zil Hijja, 1344 (July 9, 1926).

(After respects.)

IN reply to your letter of the 6th July, 1926, I inform your Excellency that I took note of Emir Ali acting as Regent on behalf of his brother, His Majesty King Feisal, King of Iraq, during his absence in Europe for reasons of health as you mentioned.

In this connection I wish to express to you that we will be at close connection with his Excellency the High Commissioner there with regard to all the Iraq matters as the usual former course.

With best respects and greetings.

[E 4677/20/91]

No. 12.

Acting Consul Jordan to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received August 9.)

(No. 87.)

Sir,

Jeddah, July 15, 1926.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 79 of the 23rd June last, relative to the Moslem Conference being held in Mecca, I have the honour to state that owing to the arrival of the Turkish, Egyptian and Afghan delegations after the completion of the pilgrimage the meetings of the conference previously adjourned were resumed on the 28th June last.

2. I have the honour to enclose herewith a report on the proceedings as far as I have been able to ascertain them.

3. Copies of this despatch and of its enclosure are being sent to India, Egypt, Jerusalem, Bagdad, Singapore and Khartum.

I have, &c.

S. R. JORDAN.

Report of the Mecca Conference.

OWING to the Turkish, Afghan and Egyptian delegations failing to arrive before the conference had been adjourned as previously reported, the sessions were resumed on the 28th June last some three days after the return of the pilgrims from the pilgrimage proper, and continued until the 6th July. The new delegations were composed of:—

Egyptian delegation—

Sheikh Ali Zawari, Sheikh of Assiut.

Colonel Missiri Bey, of the Ministry of the Interior.

Emin Bey Tewfik, the newly-appointed Egyptian consul in Jeddah.

Turkish delegation—

Colonel Edib Bey Servet, a member of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey and a close friend of the President of the Turkish Republic, Ghazi Mustafa Kemal Pasha.

Afghan delegation—

General Ghulam Jalani, Afghan Minister at Angora, Turkey.

2. Owing to the presence of the three above-mentioned official delegations who were the actual nominees of their respective Governments the Saudists found it considerably more difficult to have their own way, and when Ibn Saud, in contradiction to his instructions to the members of the conference to discuss only questions concerning the welfare and comfort of the visitors to this Holy Land, himself introduced the questions of capitulatory rights for foreigners, and foreign concessions, all three of these delegations pointed out that they had no instructions in respect of the political questions raised thereby and that consequently they could neither vote nor express an opinion on these questions.

3. The question of the annexation of Ma'an and Akaba to Transjordan was also raised by one of the Saudists' satellites, and again the official delegates refrained from voting or discussing these questions, as they considered them outside the competence of a conference called solely for religious purposes.

4. The constant bickering and small talk so noticeable in the conference previous to the adjournment was continued with unabated fury during the whole of these latter sessions.

5. From reports of the conference published in the Mecca newspaper "Umm-al-Kura" it would appear that immediately after the reopening of the conference the head of the Egyptian delegation addressed the assembled delegates, pointing out the great assistance Egypt had always given to the Holy Places in the past and how that they were prepared to do the same in the future. He added that nearly £100,000 of Egyptian money was annually spent in the Hejaz for the upkeep of the "Tekeyahs" "alms houses" and hospitals and for distribution amongst the poor. In this respect he did not add, however, that the money brought by the Mahmal this year was not distributed but was, owing to the incident on the Arafat road and other causes, taken back to Egypt.

Continuing, he protested against the presence in the conference of representatives from the Sudan as the Sudan was an integral part of Egypt, and that consequently he and his co-delegates were representing that part of the world.

6. The necessity of the Sudan delegates withdrawing was, however, obviated by the Secretary of the Conference saying that the term Sudan was a general one, but that the representatives of the Sudan so-called were really representatives of the Moslems of Kano and other African Moslem States.

7. Continuing, the Egyptian delegate reserved the right to discuss any question brought up at the Conference prior to the adjournment.

8. A motion was then submitted by the Saudists party that "in order to avoid any interference in this Holy Land no concessions should be granted to foreigners."

The Indian delegation supported the motion very strongly, and Edib Bey Servet the Turkish delegate, pointed out the position of Turkey in this respect, saying that foreign capital was essential to his country but that they had got over the difficulty by stipulating that foreign concessionaries in Turkey should be subjected to the laws of Turkey.

The motion amended accordingly was passed.

9. The eleventh meeting opened by a complaint that the members of the Suggestion Committee did not attend the sessions of the conference regularly nor punctually, and that consequently great delay and loss of time was involved thereby. The members of the committee excused themselves on account of the heat and insufficient motor transport to take them to and from the meeting place, and thereupon an animated discussion took place as to what number should constitute a quorum in order to facilitate the business of the conference, and it was eventually decided that of the twenty-four members of this committee seven should be considered as a "sufficient number." As this had taken up the whole of the session nothing further was discussed.

10. The "Umm-al-Kura" succinctly reports that the proceedings of the twelfth session were confined to the fixation of a date for the final meeting of the conference, and it was decided that no date could at present be fixed. And this ended the twelfth session.

11. Owing to the general attitude of slackness on the part of the delegates and the amount of persiflage exchanged between them and no doubt in order to prevent the conference becoming too great a farce, Ibn Saud at the opening of the thirteenth session addressed a letter to the delegates, which was read to them by Hafez Wahba. In this screed Ibn Saud exhorts the delegates to work in greater harmony and not to attempt to do too much at this the first Moslem Conference, as thereby they risk to do nothing. "Everything," said he "must be done gradually," and in order to guide them in their deliberations he outlined the political aims of the Hejaz for the future, which were as follows:—

- (1) The Hejaz accepts no foreign interference in any form in the Holy Land of Islam.
- (2) The Hejaz being a holy country, all comers to this country must submit to the Sharia laws, i.e., the religious law of Islam.
- (3) The Hejaz as a holy country should have a special law of neutrality, attacking nobody, and if attacked protected by all independent Moslem Governments.
- (4) To consider the question of charities received from Moslems abroad and the manner of their distribution.

12. In this manner Ibn Saud has deliberately raised before the conference the question of foreign capitulatory rights, which was against his previous assertions that the conference was called for non-political reasons. He has in the past month shown in many ways that the good faith which he apparently possessed upon his entry into the Hejaz was either a pose or that the bad influences around him have perverted his ideas and morals considerably.

13. During the course of the ensuing thirteenth session Taher Ilias, one of the Soviet delegates, made a spirited attack on Egypt for causing them difficulties in the matter of their passports, and also claimed that although the British authorities had given them their visas readily they were having them very closely watched. He requested that such actions should be considered by the conference. Although called to order several times, he continued to harangue the assembly in a most heated manner until exhausted with his own eloquence.

14. The Indian delegation, supported by the Yemen, Soviet and Afghan delegates then brought up the question of religious liberty in the Hejaz for all sects of Islam, and this was discussed at length by all the leading delegates, and the defence of the Saudists, led by Ibn Biliehad, the head of the Nejd delegation, was poor. Edib Bey Servet, the Turkish delegate, said that the question would appear to be outside the competence of this conference, and should be referred to a committee of religious experts. After a most heated and acrimonious discussion, Edib Bey Servet's suggestion was adopted by 27 votes to 21.

15. At the commencement of the 14th session Sheikh Abu Azaim, head of the Egyptian Khilafists, and who till now had continued as a representative of Egypt, was obliged to resign from the conference on account of the presence of the official Egyptian delegation.

16. The question of a railway from Jeddah to Mecca was discussed, and it was considered that £400,000 would be needed for the erection of this line, which would be 80 kilom. long.

17. The salary of the president of the conference was fixed at £600, the Ali brothers dissenting, as they stated that even members of the British Parliament only received £400.

18. It was also decided that the conference should end on the 24th Zil Hijja, i.e., 5th July.

19. At the 15th and final meeting of the conference, which lasted some five hours, the greater part was taken up by the discussion of religious matters, and spirited attacks on Ibn Saud for the destruction of the tombs and curtailment of the religious freedom of the various sects of Islam during the Haj.

20. A motion protesting against the annexation of Akaba and Ma'an to Transjordan was also passed, and the Hejaz Government was requested to endeavour to secure possession of this territory.

21. The question of the Jeddah-Mecca Railway was also further discussed, and it was decided that an executive committee should be appointed within three months. Turkey should supply an expert engineer for the enterprise, Egypt to supply an irrigation expert, India a financier, and Palestine and Syria to supply an education expert. The King's second son, Feisal, was appointed honorary chief of the Committee of Contributions, and a provisional committee of Hejazis was appointed to carry on till the nomination of the permanent executive board.

The meeting ended with a suggestion by the Ali brothers that every Moslem should consider it as prohibited for him to fight against a fellow-Moslem, and that the conference should appoint a committee of peace (a sort of Moslem League of Nations) to maintain peace amongst the world's Moslems.

This was not put to the vote.

22. The usual banquet was given at the end of the conference, and the Turkish, Afghan, Egyptian and Soviet delegations returned to Jeddah and sailed for their respective homes immediately.

The Indian Khilafists and Hadith and ulema societies proceeded to Medina.

23. Edib Bey Servet, the Turkish delegate, called at this Agency upon his return from Mecca, and stated that he had been very disappointed with the result of the conference, "but" he added "one cannot expect too much from this country." He stated that he had been sent by the Ghazi Mustafa Kemal Pasha with a watching brief only, and that he would have no difficulty in making his report upon the results attained by the conference, which could be summed up in one word, "nil." In support of this contention he quoted an old Arab saying, to the effect that the Arabs can only agree upon one thing, and that is, to disagree on everything. He also mentioned the Soviet delegation, and referred particularly to one Musa Jarullah, who was remaining in Mecca to continue his religious studies. He recommended him for my good offices if at any time he required a visa, and assured me of his harmlessness from a political point of view.

24. Pakeh Juan Taib, a Javanese or Sumatran, the editor of the "Seruan Azhar" in Cairo and one of the Javanese delegates, applied for a visa to proceed to Palestine on the completion of the conference, but in view of his anti-white and Communistic utterances, which have already been reported by me, I refused the visa and informed Palestine of Juan's intentions.

25. The head of the Palestinian delegation, Amin Husseini, who I understand is the president of the Arab Society of Palestine or some such society, was in very close touch with the Soviet delegates throughout, and I think that Pakeh Juan's visit might not be unconnected with this fact, as well as the hope of some pecuniary gain or support for his paper in Cairo by backing the pan-Arab cause in Palestine.

26. Emin Bey Tewfik, the local Egyptian consul and a member of the Egyptian delegation, informed me upon his return from Mecca that the letter addressed by Ibn Saud to the delegates, and which was read at the conference, was somewhat different to the copy of same as published by the Mecca newspaper, and that the question of Ma'an and Akaba had also been broached in that epistle. He added that both on the question of capitulatory rights for foreigners and the question of Ma'an and Akaba, Egyptian, Turkish and Afghan delegates refused to vote or discuss the matter, and that he personally, when the question of Capitulations was raised, informed the assembly that such a question was an internal and political question concerning the Hejaz, and was outside the competence of the conference and beyond the instructions received by him from his Government, and that consequently the Egyptian delegation must withdraw from all discussion on that matter. This speech created a certain amount of indignation amongst a number of delegates, and he was subjected to severe criticism by many of the unofficial delegates.

27. It is to be noted with approval, however, that all three of the officially appointed delegates refused to vote on the questions, and also that one or two of the Indian delegations also refused to discuss or vote on the question of Capitulations,

as with their abolition they realised that there would be no protection whatever for the pilgrims.

28. Emin Bey also informed me in a confidential manner that Edib Bey Servet visited the King and informed Ibn Saud that whilst Turkey was on terms of the closest friendship with His Majesty and was also grateful to him for avenging the treachery of the family of Hussein during the great war, he could nevertheless expect little or no help from Turkey in the case of eventualities.

Edib Bey, continuing, informed Ibn Saud that Turkey was now on terms of friendship with Great Britain, and that as a very poor country but with enormous potential wealth, peace was absolutely necessary to her for many years to assure the development and exploitation of their natural resources.

He further informed His Majesty, on account of the friendship existing between them, that the policy His Majesty was at present following was one of suicide, and that he should not be guided by Syrian and Palestinian political parasites who were merely seeking their own gain, and that, for any Power like the Hejaz, firm and friendly relations with the greater Powers of the world were absolutely essential.

The above information, Emin Bey assures me, was communicated to him by Edib Bey personally, and I have no reason to doubt its accuracy.

29. The disappointment of the Ali brothers in finding that the Turkish delegate was not prepared to back their hare-brained schemes after their spirited proposals that the head of the Turkish delegation should be the president of the conference was, I am told, most acute.

S. R. JORDAN.

[E 4678/900/91]

No. 13.

Vice-Consul Jordan to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received August 9.)

(No. 89.)

Sir,

Jeddah, July 20, 1926

IN continuation of my despatch No. 87 of the 15th instant, relative to the recent Moslem Conference held in Mecca, I have the honour to report that prior to the pilgrimage, when many influential Indian and other Moslems were passing through Jeddah on their way to Mecca, I took the opportunity whenever I came into contact with such to point out the evils and horrors of the slave trade existing in the Hejaz, and even within the Haramain itself, in the hope that this matter might be brought up at the conference and discussed thereat.

2. I was ably seconded in my efforts by Munshi Ihsanullah whilst he was in Mecca, and I am pleased to be able to report that a resolution to the effect that the Hejaz Government should abolish all slavery in this country except that permitted by the "Sharia," i.e., religious law, which limits slavery to captives taken in war, proposed by Kefiatullah, the president of the Ulema Society of India, "Jumiat-ul-Ulema," and strongly supported by many of the delegates at the conference and particularly by the Khilafists themselves, was passed by a large majority.

3. The local newspaper, "Umm-al-Kura," has refrained from publishing a report on the discussions on this subject.

4. Irrespective of the advantages this resolution may or may not have in respect of the eventual abolition of slavery in the Hejaz, I venture to think that it will be a useful instrument in the hands of His Britannic Majesty's Government to be used occasion demands and more particularly when Ibn Saud produces the bogey of resolutions passed at the recent conference to back his claim to Ma'an and Akaba or in respect of the abolition of the Capitulations and other like measures, as unless he personally abides by such resolutions he can hardly expect foreign Governments to do so.

5. I venture to hope that my actions in this matter, the results of which have exceeded by far my most optimistic anticipations, will meet with your approval.

6. A copy of this despatch is being sent to the Government of India.

I have, &c.

S. R. JORDAN.

No. 14.

Acting Agent, Jeddah, to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received August 12.)

(No. 75.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Jeddah, August 11, 1926.

LOCAL newspaper has published article refuting any intention on the part of Ibn Saud to destroy the Prophet's tomb. Newspaper adds that His Majesty has more than once stated that he is prepared to sacrifice his property, soul and sons for the house and tomb of the Prophet.

Translation by post.

(Sent to India.)

No. 15.

Acting Agent, Jeddah, to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received August 12.)

(No. 76.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Jeddah, August 11, 1926.

IBN SAUD requests permission for his second son, Faisal, to visit England in the course of next few weeks in order to thank his Majesty's Government for recognition.

He will proceed to France and Holland for similar purpose afterwards.

Minister for Foreign Affairs, who came from Mecca expressly for the purpose, also requested advice as to whether he should visit Russia.

I informed him that I thought the cold would be too intense, and confidentially that visit might react unfavourably on nations which had not yet recognised present régime.

[E 4613/80/91]

No. 16.

Sir Austen Chamberlain to M. van Swinderen.

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 14, 1926.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your note No. 994 of the 22nd July, informing me of the confirmation by the Netherlands Government of the agreement and protocol signed at Paris on the 19th June last, regarding the control and administration of the quarantine station at Kamaran Island.

2. In reply I have the honour to inform you that the Governments of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and of India also confirm those instruments.

I have, &c.

AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN.

No. 17.

Sir Austen Chamberlain to Mr. Jordan (Jeddah).

[By Admiralty Wireless.]

(No. 54.)

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, August 19, 1926.

YOUR telegram No. 77 of 15th August: Treaty revision with Ibn Saud and proposed visit of Amir Feisal to England.

Official visit of Amir Feisal before the conclusion of negotiations for revised treaty would hardly be desirable, nor would it be convenient at time of year proposed. You should therefore do your best tactfully to discourage it.

You can explain to Ibn Saud that neither the King nor the majority of His Majesty's Ministers will be in London during September and October, and that consequently it will be impossible to make suitable arrangements for the official entertainment of Feisal. At the same time, if Ibn Saud desires his son to visit this country as a private individual, he will be welcome and arrangements will be made

to extend all possible courtesy to him. You may explain that incognito visits of this nature are frequently made by Royal personages of other countries. For example, King Feisal of Iraq is now in London incognito.

In case of private visit would he expect expenses of visit to be defrayed by His Majesty's Government? In any case staff should be reduced to minimum.

If above proposal is acceptable to Ibn Saud, I am prepared to agree to your accompanying Feisal during the visit to this country, but not to France or Holland, where Prince would have to make his own arrangements.

Opportunity could be utilised to discuss treaty with you. Would local staff of Agency be able to carry on during your absence?

Preparation of draft of new treaty involves much inter-departmental discussion, and in any case I cannot hope to furnish you with instructions before end of September. You may explain this to Ibn Saud, emphasising fact that earnest consideration is being given to this question by His Majesty's Government, and every effort is being made to hasten possibility of early negotiations.

If you come here with Amir Feisal, you could take back with you draft of treaty and open negotiations on your return.

Colonial Office are endeavouring to obtain loan of services of Mr. Antonius to assist you with work of translation, &c.

Your telegram No. 76 of 11th August, last paragraph.

I approve your language to Minister for Foreign Affairs.

[E 4921/20/91]

No. 18.

Vice-Consul Jordan to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received August 23.)

(No. 91.)

Sir,

Jeddah, July 28, 1926.

WITH reference to paragraph 3 of my report on the second phase of the world's Moslem Conference recently held in Mecca, which was forwarded under cover of this agency's despatch No. 87 of the 15th instant, I have the honour to forward herewith an extract from a recent issue of the Mecca newspaper "Um-ul-Kura," setting out the discussion that took place in the conference when the motion regarding the re-annexation of Akaba and Maan was put before the assembled representatives.

Sheikh Rashid Ridha, the proposer of the motion, was the tool of the Hejaz Government throughout the whole conference, and it may be taken as certain that the motion was inspired by Ibn Saud.

Rashid Ridha has recently left for Egypt, but, before his departure, he received a sum of £2,000 from Ibn Saud for the prosecution of Saudist propaganda in Egypt.

Suliman-el-Nadvi is the president of the Indian Khilafists, and Abdul Halcem-el-Sadiqi is one of the members of the "Jumat-ul-Ulema" delegation, also from India.

Copies of this despatch are being sent to India, Egypt and Jerusalem.

I have, &c.

S. R. JORDAN.

Enclosure in No. 18.

*Extract from the "Um-ul-Kura," No. 84, of July 23, 1926.**Eighteenth Meeting of the Conference.*

ON Monday, 24/12/1344, the meeting was held, forty-seven out of sixty-six members being present.

The secretary read the summary of the last meeting's report, and, after some discussion regarding certain suggestions forwarded to the committee, but not included in the agenda of this meeting, he read out the suggestion about the monuments.

Then the secretary read out the suggestion regarding Akaba and Maan, forwarded by Mohammed Rashid Ridha and Suliman-el-Nadvi.

The suggestion is as follows:—

"As the Akaba and Maan areas are of the Hejaz territories belonging to the Moslems, according to the will of the Prophet, may peace and prayers of God be upon him, at the illness of his death, and as Sherif Ali, son of Sherif Hussein, has agreed with his brother Abdullah to have them separated from the Hejaz and annexed to Transjordanian territories, the former issuing an order for same, and the latter receiving such places accordingly, and as Sherif Ali was not a legal King over the Hejaz, because he was declared King by some of his people who called themselves the National Assembly, but they are not considered as responsible competent authorities in the Hejaz Kingdom, the capital of which and much of its lands and tribes were already under the Sultan of Nejd, and, owing to the fact that the legal rulers in the Hejaz are not entitled legally to grant anything of its lands to other Governments, neither by their own personal will nor by any other way, and as the territory of Transjordan is under a non-Moslem country in a new arrangement called mandate, the thing which enlarges the sin of annexing them and is regarded as a distinct contradiction to the will of the Prophet, may peace and prayers of God be upon him, in the illness of his death—such will ought to be anxiously carried out by every Moslem in order that the Hejaz will remain for the Moslems and that nobody will dwell in it, have the right of residing, ruling, or prevailing his influence except them—we therefore request the conference to make a protest against what happened, in fulfilment of the Prophet's will which every believer of God and the Prophet Mohammed claims, and to ask the ruler of the Hejaz to endeavour to reannex Akaba and Maan to the Hejaz by all means and to ask the Moslem world in general to help him in this thing."

Abdul Haleem-el-Sadiqi pointed out that the Prophet's wishes were general (*i.e.*, concerned the whole of the Arabian Peninsula), and do not concern Akaba and Maan alone. He asked why the matter should not be clear. Rashid Ridha replied that the former's comments, based on the introduction of his suggestion, should not be taken as grounds for discussing the subject of the suggestion, as such introduction was made to support the suggestion, and as to the introduction itself, whether it is agreed upon or not, he is responsible for it. He also said that there is no dispute about the subject of the question from the religious point of view. He also hinted at the fact that certain Indians have considered Syria and Iraq as parts of the Arabian Peninsula. He concluded by saying that he hoped that the suggestion would be approved, and if anybody had any objection he was ready to answer them.

Then the Egyptian delegation said that discussion of this matter was beyond their province, and so did the Afghan, on behalf of themselves and the Turkish delegation.

Then Suliman-el-Nadvi spoke, proving the right of the Hejaz to the ownership of Akaba and Maan.

At last the suggestion was accepted by most of them except those who stated that they would not take part in the discussion.

The question of electing the executive board was then discussed, and at last an extra article was added to the effect that such board should be postponed for three months and a temporary one constituted for the present.

The president then ended the meeting by a speech in which he thanked the members for coming, and prayed for their success.

[E 4937/367/91]

No. 19.

Vice-Consul Jordan to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received August 24.)

(No. 92. Secret.)

Sir,

Jeddah, July 31, 1926.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith my report on the situation in the Hejaz during the period, the 1st to the 31st July, 1926.

Copies of this report are being sent to Egypt, Jerusalem (2), Bagdad, Aden, Simla, Beirut (for Damascus), Khartum (through Port Sudan) and Singapore.

I have, &c.

S. R. JORDAN.

Enclosure 1 in No. 19.

Report on Events in the Hejaz during the Period July 1-31, 1926.

DURING the period under report a revolt of the Bani Malik and the Tihana Arabs against the authority of Ibn Saud has broken out and the first fruits of victory rest with the revolting tribesmen, who have defeated a party of about 500 that Ibn Saud sent against them. They are rumoured to be advancing towards Taif, where Ibn Saud has stored a certain amount of the war materials captured from the Sheriffs at the fall of Medina and Jeddah. On the evening of the 26th July, an urgent telephone call at 9 p.m. awoke the local garrison to action and the majority of the motor cars of the concessionnaires were commandeered and the soldiers of the garrison transported to Mecca before midnight. Several guns and a number of machine guns were also taken to Mecca the same evening. All this would appear to confirm the news of the initial reverse of Ibn Saud's troops, but of the eventual victory there would appear to be little doubt, and the Arabs in revolt will soon be wiped out unless they are joined by other and stronger tribes. Ibn Saud has now sent a well-armed party of about 2,000 against them.

2. Another significant incident, but which allows of several interpretations, is that about the beginning of the period under report, a warship, flying either the Italian or French flag, lay off Rabigh and a number of local sailing craft, known as sambouks, went out to her and returned laden with cases of ammunition. The number of sambouks is rumoured to have been fifteen, but, allowing for the tendency for all true Orientals to exaggerate, it was probably not more than eight or ten. Owing to the distance the ship lay off the shore my informant states that it was impossible to distinguish as to whether it was a French or Italian ship. When the news was given to Ibn Saud he thanked the informant but laughingly told him that it was his own ammunition. It appears probable that this may be a present to Ibn Saud from the French for signing the commercial treaty with Syria, but I have been unable to ascertain any further details regarding the ship and its cargo.

3. Raiding on the frontiers would appear to be on the decline as I have received no complaints either from the local authorities or from Iraq and Transjordan during the present month.

4. Ibn Saud has sent a representative to Amman to treat with the Transjordan authorities for the return of all looted animals and effects.

5. His Majesty's eldest son, Saud, who came from Riyadh for the pilgrimage, is now proceeding to Egypt to undergo an operation on his eyes. The Egyptian eye specialist who operated on the King himself some time ago refused to make a second visit to the Hejaz, and so perforce the son is obliged to go to Egypt. The party, which will be composed of some thirty persons, intend leaving on the steamship "Mansourah" of the Khedivial Mail Line, on the 2nd August. Formal permission has been obtained from the Egyptian Government, but the local newspaper to-day publishes a long article to the effect that the Egyptian Government has invited Saud to Egypt and that, during his stay in that country, he will be the guest of the King.

6. A certain Punjabi, by name Mohammed Rashen Akhtar, has been appointed inspector-general of the municipalities of the Hejaz, and is supposed to be organising the municipalities of the larger towns of Ibn Saud's territories with a view to making them more efficient in the collection of taxes. He is a pan-Islamist and a keen propagandist.

7. Another appointment that caused mild surprise locally is that of Suleiman Taufick Pasha as adviser to the King. Suleiman Taufick Pasha is a Turk and formerly held important posts under the old Turkish régime, including that of War Minister. His appointment is naturally distasteful to the Syrian elements and may also be distasteful to Turkey, as he is an anti-Kemalist. Another Turk, who is at present residing in Egypt, also an anti-Kemalist, has been requested by the King to come to the Hejaz and accept a position under the Government as adviser to the Emir Feisal, the King's second son. Whether this means, as a number of local people are prone to consider, that the King is becoming dissatisfied with the Syrian parasites with which he is surrounded, or merely an effort on his part to make his entourage even more cosmopolitan than at present, is not for the moment evident.

8. A committee composed of a number of the notables of Mecca has been formed with the object of inducing the King to employ many of the ex-Turkish employees, as it is considered that they, bad as they may be, would nevertheless be a big improvement on the nondescript crowd at present employed under the Government.

9. Yet another sign of the King's tendency to rid himself of the Syrian elements is that the Syrian Tyeb Hazazi, the King's Chamberlain, whom I have

mentioned previously as being in the pay of the French Government, has been dismissed and will accompany the King's son to Egypt and from there proceed to Syria whence he came.

10. The financial situation, as during the reign of Ali, could hardly be worse, and although the pilgrimage is just completed, the King is already asking the merchants of Jeddah for a loan of £40,000. At a private meeting held in the house of the Governor of the town it was agreed to offer £15,000 only as the pilgrimage had not been a very large one and the merchants were still suffering from the effects of the late war. This sum is being chiefly contributed by the three leading merchants in Jeddah, the houses of Zeinal Ali Riza, Banaja, and Suleiman Gabil.

11. With reference to the dues that the Government are now charging to the pilgrims over and above His Majesty's declaration some time previous to the pilgrimage, a further charge of 5 medjidiehs, or approximately 9s., is being made on all pilgrims at Medina under the heading of Koshan. This, with the 33 piastres, approximately 7s., charged for the health certificate upon leaving the Hejaz, and the further charge of 1s. for passport fees makes in all an addition of 17s. per head over and above what was at first estimated as the total dues payable by the pilgrims.

12. A certain Javanese, by name, Tuan Sheik Mukhtar, has been busy recently in Mecca collecting funds on behalf of the Senussi to enable him to carry on the campaign against the Italians in Tunisia. I understand that no great amount has been collected to date.

13. The World's Moslem Conference ended on the 5th July last, and I attach hereto a résumé of the resolutions passed thereat. The Afghan, Egyptian, and Turkish delegates left Jeddah on the 6th July, and the majority of the remaining delegates proceeded to Medina to complete the pilgrimage. One of the main reasons that Ibn Saud is now in a state of apparent destitution and forced to raise loans from the local merchants, is that he has had, towards the end of the conference, to distribute large sums of money to all and sundry of the delegates with few exceptions to gain their goodwill, and in order to secure them for propaganda purposes in their respective countries. Rashid Ridha, a Syrian residing in Egypt, received £2,000, and Emin Husseini, the head of the Palestinian delegation, received £1,000. Abu Azaim of the Valley of the Nile Khilafists, received £300, and many of the others received amounts varying from £200 to £600. It is calculated that, with presents, bribes, and other incidental expenditure, the conference cost Ibn Saud not less than £20,000. Over and above this expenditure he has also been distributing large sums to the heads of the various tribes, as has been the custom in this part of the world from time immemorial, to secure peace on the various caravan and pilgrim routes. This, with all the incidental Government expenditure, and approximately £40,000 worth of orders placed in Great Britain for the supply of a condenser, coal, motor cars and spares, and new coinage, appears to have absorbed the revenue derived from the pilgrimage, and now leaves Ibn Saud practically penniless.

14. The Taif claims have for the most part been settled satisfactorily, only in the case of one person was the compensation awarded refused and the matter referred to this agency. This was the case of a Malay jeweller of Singapore, who, in consideration of his claim for £2,700 was offered £140. The matter has been referred to the King, requesting a reassessment, and it is hoped that this final claim will also receive satisfaction.

15. The pilgrimage progresses more or less satisfactorily, and it is hoped to clear out the remaining pilgrims before the middle of the present month. The caravans arrived safely at Medina and have by now left there for Yanbo and Jeddah. So far no complaints have been received of any pilgrim being ill-treated on the road.

16. Some ten days ago an Italian ship by the name of steamship "Yemen" arrived in Jeddah, and the local agent applied for a certificate to carry 418 pilgrims to Suakim, Hodeidah and Aden. Upon measuring the ship I found that, in accordance with the pilgrim regulations, she could not carry more than 300, but, in view of the fact that 273 of the 418 were bound for Suakim, only twenty-four hours distance from Jeddah, I issued a certificate as requested in order to clear these people out of Jeddah, where the majority were living in the streets in a state of indescribable filth.

17. The Mahmal and escort returned to Egypt on the steamship "Boulac" on the 4th July last, and did not proceed to Medina. The greater part of the funds brought with them for distribution was also taken back owing to the hostility and lack of consideration shown to the Mahmal in the Hejaz. With reference to the incident at Muna on the road between Mecca and Arafat, the local newspaper

"Um-ul-Kura," has published a notice that the Government consider the incident of the Mahmal as an ordinary occurrence, and that it has not affected the friendship between the Government of Egypt and the Hejaz.

18. The situation between the Yemen and the Hejaz continues to be rather obscure. The Yemen delegate to the conference was inclined to follow the lead of the Turkish and Egyptian delegates, and thereby did not endear himself to the Powers that be in the Hejaz. He arrived in Jeddah some two weeks ago, and, after a stay of six days, left on the Italian steamer for Massawa. During his stay in Jeddah he was in constant touch with the Italian consul, and on the occasion of his departure the Italian consul offered a banquet on board the Italian ship. He, however, refrained from inviting any of his colleagues.

19. In view of the successes which have crowned the Wahabis' efforts at propaganda in foreign countries, the Yemen is now about to start a campaign in Egypt, according to information received from reliable sources. It appears that six persons of the immediate entourage of the Yemen delegate, Sheikh Hussein Abdul Qader, after they had obtained this agency's visa to enable them to proceed to Palestine to visit the Mosque of Omar, applied to the Egyptian consulate to be granted visas for Egypt. These were refused, as the matter had first to be referred to the Department of Public Security, and so all six came back to this agency and requested that their visas for Palestine should be cancelled, and that they should be granted visas for Aden. This aroused my curiosity and later investigation revealed that they were proceeding to Aden, where they hoped to obtain the visas for Egypt and proceed direct from there. They are supposed to be carrying funds for propaganda purposes, but whether this propaganda will take the form of anti-Wahabism or not, I have been unable to ascertain. The names of these six persons are: Thabet Yahya, Abdullah-bin-Abdullah, Salem Saleh, Hussein Mohammed, Hamoud Mohammed, and Ahmed Saleh. One of their number, in conversation with a member of the staff of this agency, declared that the Imam of Yemen would have attacked before the pilgrimage had it not been for the complications and complaints that might have arisen from other Moslem countries at being prevented once more from making the Haj. He further stated that the Imam's son, Ahmed Seffidin, would command the army on the frontiers of Asir, and that a tribe called the Yâam on the frontiers had refused to pay "Zikkat" (animal tax) to Ibn Saud and had joined with the Yemen.

20. The Bolshevik delegate, Musa Jarulla, who created a scene during one of the final sittings of the conference by attacking the Egyptian delegation for inconveniences caused to him by their Government in regard to passports and visas, and who was to have remained in Mecca for some time to continue his religious studies, has since changed his mind, and applied to this agency for a visa to proceed to Turkey via Palestine and Syria. He was granted a direct transit visa, and the Government of Palestine was warned of his pending arrival.

21. Pakeh Juan, a Javanese established in Cairo and the editor of the Cairo paper called the "Seruan Azhar," applied for a visa to proceed to Palestine, which was refused. He then approached the acting Dutch consul, who asked me my reasons for refusing the visa. I informed him of the activities of this man, and he expressed himself as being completely satisfied and asked that he might communicate this information to his Government.

22. Syed Ali-el-Idrissi arrived in Jeddah from Aden on the 30th July, and after a stay of twenty-four hours in Jeddah, left for Mecca as the guest of Ibn Saud.

23. A certain British subject, by the name of Upcher, a Christian missionary, arrived in Jeddah recently without an endorsement on his passport for this country and endeavoured to obtain an interview with Ibn Saud in order to request from him permission to carry on his missionary activities in the Hejaz. I strongly advised Mr. Upcher to leave Jeddah by the next steamer, which he did, without having his expected interview with the King and Imam of the most fanatical of all Moslem sects.

24. The local authorities have now issued a passport in book form, printed in English and Arabic, and it is a poor imitation of a British passport. These passports bear photographs and have a validity for one year only.

25. From a commercial point of view the outlook in the Hejaz for the next few months is particularly black, as there is no money available and consequently only cash transactions should be entertained until further notice.

26. Two slaves have been repatriated during the period under report.

S. R. JORDAN.

Enclosure 2 in No. 19.

Suggestions submitted to the Mecca Conference.

1. SANITARY state of the Hejaz. Submitted by Amni-el-Husseini of the Palestinian delegation. Approved and forwarded to the Hejaz Government.
2. The Wakfs of the Haramain. Submitted by Yusuf Yasin of the Nedjian delegation. Approved and forwarded to the Executive Board.
3. A similar suggestion submitted by Abd-ul-Aziz-el-Mteiqi of the Asir delegation. As above.
4. Education in the Hejaz. Submitted by many of the delegations, particularly the Egyptian and the Indian. Accepted and referred to the Executive Board.
5. Repairs to the public buildings in the Haramain and the construction of homes for orphans. Submitted by Mohammed Nassif of the Hejaz delegation. approved and referred to the Executive Board.
6. Construction of a railway between Jeddah and Mecca. Submitted by Suleiman-el-Nadwi and Shaukat Ali of the Indian Khilafist delegation. Accepted and referred to the Executive Board and the Hejaz Government.
7. Sacrifices and railways. Submitted by Abu Zaid of the Asir delegation. Accepted and referred to the Executive Board.
8. Recovery of the Hejaz Railway. Submitted by Amin Husseini of the Palestinian delegation. Approved and referred to the Executive Board and the Government of the Hejaz.
9. Prohibition against granting concessions to foreigners. Submitted by Shuaib Kureishi of the Indian Khilafist delegation. Approved and referred to the Executive Board.
10. Religious pardons. Submitted by Kefiatullah of the Indian Ulema delegation. Accepted and referred to the Executive Board, with slight alterations.
11. Reconstitution of the Suggestions Committee. Submitted by Taufick Sherif of the Asir delegation. Six members were appointed for this duty.
12. Prevention of apostasy. Submitted by Mohammed Ali of the Indian Khilafist delegation. Accepted and referred to the Executive Board.
13. Abolition of slavery. Submitted by Kefiatullah of the Indian Ulema delegation. It was decided that the Hejaz Government should be requested to stop slavery in the Hejaz other than that which is in accordance with the Sharia.
14. Postponing the signature of the laws of the conference. Submitted by Edib Servet Bey of the Turkish delegation. It was agreed that those who were present at the formation of the laws should sign them and those that came afterwards should not.
15. Building of railways. Submitted by the Egyptian delegation. Accepted, and it was decided that such should be built with money contributed by the Moslems of the world, and should be their property.
16. Sanitary re-organisation of the Hejaz. Submitted by the Egyptian delegation. Accepted, and it was decided that such should be carried out by the local Government.
17. A further motion on sanitary matters. Submitted by the Turkish, Afghan and Bolshevik delegations. Accepted.
18. Management of the affairs of the Haj. Submitted by Sanaullah of the Indian Hadith delegation. Accepted and forwarded to the Government.
19. Praying in the Haram. Submitted by Shuaib Kureishi of the Indian Khilafist delegation. Accepted and forwarded to the Government.
20. Recovery of Akaba and Ma'an. Submitted by Rashid Ridha of the Asir delegation and Suleiman Nadwi of the Indian Khilafist delegation. Approved and decided.
21. Regarding monuments and tombs. Submitted by Shaukat Ali of the Indian Khilafist delegation. Referred to a committee of learned men.
22. The teaching of Arabic. Submitted by Bahjat-el-Bitar of the Syrian delegation. Accepted and decided.
23. Fixing a date for the end of the conference. Submitted by Ibn Bileihed of the Nedjian delegation. Accepted, and it was decided that the conference should end on the 24th, Zel Hegga.

A footnote to the twentieth resolution states that some of the independent countries did not take part in the decision.

It has been further decided that each delegation is to constitute a committee in its respective country for the collection of contributions for the building of the railways, &c., and that the head of each of these committees should be the head of the delegation. The actual head of all the committees is the head of the conference.

It was also decided that the Emir Faisal, the King's son, should be honorary head of the General Committee.

[E 4923/366/91]

No. 20.

Vice-Consul Jordan to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received August 23.)

(No. 93.)

Sir,

Jeddah, August 1, 1926.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 12th May last, No. 62, concerning the proposed agreement between the Sudan and Hejaz Governments as to the ownership of the Port Sudan-Jeddah cable, I have the honour to report that the superintendent of the Eastern Telegraph Company's office in Port Sudan, Mr. Broadbent, arrived in Jeddah on the 9th June last, and on the 16th June we met with representatives of the Hejaz Government to discuss the future working arrangements of the Jeddah terminal of the cable as envisaged in the sixth paragraph of my despatch under reference.

The Hejaz representatives were the Governor of Jeddah and the Director-General of the Hejaz Posts and Telegraphs Administration.

They informed Mr. Broadbent and myself that they had received instructions from His Majesty to insist that the Hejaz terminal should be worked exclusively by the Hejaz Administration, as His Majesty could not allow any foreign or Christian influence to be established in the Hejaz.

This, of course, is a direct contradiction of the attitude adopted by His Majesty during the interview I had with him upon my return from Port Sudan, and is probably accounted for by the fact that the World's Moslem Conference was sitting in Mecca and His Majesty had been influenced by the hot-headed agitators from abroad who came to the Hejaz to attend that gathering.

After a great deal of discussion, lasting over three days, the Governor hinted rather that a provisional control by the Eastern Telegraph Company might be acceptable to the Hejaz, but, as the pilgrimage was the following day, he was obliged to go to Mecca, but promised to see the King and put the matter before him.

Owing to the delays encountered and the resumption of the Moslem Conference after the Haj, Mr. Broadbent was obliged to return to Port Sudan.

Soon after, the cable broke at a point some 80 miles from Port Sudan, or approximately half-way between Jeddah and that port, and cable communication has been interrupted since then.

On the 15th July Ibn Saud addressed a telegram to this agency stating that the cable was broken, and requesting that the necessary repairs should be executed as soon as possible.

In reply, I informed His Majesty by telephone that the Sudan Government had already lost approximately £30,000 on the cable, and were not prepared to spend another penny upon it unless an accord was reached on the outstanding articles of the draft agreement already presented to him.

He replied that he would do all that he could, but that he was bound by certain obligations to his religion, his country and the World's Moslems, and regretted that he could not allow the establishment of any foreign control of the Hejaz telegraphic communications, but that he would instruct his Minister for Foreign Affairs to proceed to Jeddah to further discuss this question with me.

Thereupon I wired to Mr. Broadbent to come over if possible. I have since ascertained that he was in hospital and was unable to come to Jeddah, so, acting on the information received from him during his previous visit, and more particularly in view of the fact that he had requested his company's views on the question of the control of the Jeddah terminal by the Hejaz authorities and certain compensation to them for this work, and the company's reply having been favourable, I proceeded to discuss the question with the Minister, and the draft agreement enclosed herewith is the result of these deliberations.

Ibn Saud has signified his acceptance of this agreement, and his Minister has signed a copy of same subject to the acceptance by the Sudan Government and the Eastern Telegraph Company.

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E 2

I consider that this represents the final concessions that the Hejaz Government are prepared to make, and as it, in the main principles involved, conforms to the policy of His Majesty's Government towards this country, and the Eastern Telegraph Company are assured of an approximate clear profit of £2,500 per annum, they should have but little hesitation in accepting same.

Nothing in the draft agreement in any way affects the Sudan Government adversely in relation to the original draft prepared in Port Sudan, and acceptance by that Government would expedite the reopening of the cable and the resumption of ordinary communications.

The final paragraph of the agreement is further evidence of the pan-Arab sentiments with which these people are imbued, and they at first insisted that the agreement should be in Arabic, as they were not fully conversant with English and both the Sudan and Hejaz were Arabic-speaking countries, and if the company worked between and with Arabic-speaking countries, then they must be conversant with the language.

The mention of His Britannic Majesty's Government in the final paragraph will, I hope, be acceptable to you, and I am of the opinion that such an eventuality as foreshadowed therein will never arise, as the translations have been done most carefully by the translator attached to this Agency.

I shall be glad if I may be informed if there is any objection to the agreement between the Sudan and Hejaz Governments as joint owners and the Eastern Telegraph Company enclosed herewith, or to the agreement between the Sudan and Hejaz Governments as to the joint ownership forwarded under cover of my despatch No. 36 of the 7th April, 1926.

Copies of this despatch are being sent to Cairo and Khartum.

I have, &c.

S. R. JORDAN.

Enclosure in No. 20.

Draft Agreement.

WHEREAS it has this day been agreed upon between the Sudan and Hejaz Governments (hereafter called the Joint Owners), on the one part, and the Eastern Telegraph Company (Limited) (hereafter called the Company), on the other part, as follows:—

1. That both the terminals of the Port Sudan-Jeddah Cable, hereafter called the cable, shall be worked (subject to the reservations in article 9 of this agreement), and the cable maintained and kept in good repair by the Company free of charge to the Joint Owners for a period of twenty-five years.

2. That this agreement shall be subject to two years' notice of termination after the first two years by either of the parties hereto.

3. The parties to this agreement agree that a charge of not more than 1 fr. 50 c. gold shall be payable in respect of each word transmitted over the cable, including both terminal charges, and of this charge the sum of 1 fr. 25 c. gold shall accrue to the Company, who will deal directly with the public in Port Sudan, and the balance of 25 centimes gold shall accrue to the Hejaz Government in respect of services in dealing direct with the public in Jeddah.

4. The Company agree to accept half the cable rate in respect of all Sudan and Hejaz Government telegrams transmitted over the cable.

5. The charges and/or apportionments as set out in article 3 shall be liable to revision after a period of two years from the date of this agreement.

6. The Hejaz Government undertakes not to use for foreign communications its own wireless or cables or the wireless or cables of any other company, and the Company on its part undertakes to secure the communications by wireless in case the cable is out of order. Should the Company refuse to do so, the Hejaz Government will be free to operate its own communications in any way it may find convenient during the period the cable is not working.

7. The Sudan Government undertakes not to use wireless between the Sudan and the Hejaz in competition with the cable.

8. The Hejaz Government agrees to exempt from sanitary, harbour or other dues any cable ship of the Company entering Hejaz waters and to allow the free importation of all materials landed for the repairs or extension of the cable.

9. In consideration of the fact that the Hejaz Government is anxious to avoid any arrangement which might be construed as foreign interference or intervention in Hejaz local affairs, the Company agree that the Jeddah terminal shall be worked by the Hejaz Postal and Telegraph Administration, and the Company shall be liable for the salaries of not more than two of the employees of that administration, the total amount of which shall not exceed the sum of £20 per month. In consideration of this arrangement, the Hejaz Government agree to invite not more than two persons of the Mahometan faith to be nominated by the Company to be employed in the Hejaz Postal and Telegraph Administration for a period not exceeding six months in order that the Hejaz Administration may become acquainted with the routine and procedure of the Company, and during this period of six months the Company shall be liable in respect of the salaries of the persons so nominated only. All salaries are to be paid by the Hejaz Administration and debited to the Company.

10. The parties to this agreement undertake to submit and settle all accounts monthly.

11. The Company agrees to hand back the cable to the Joint Owners upon the expiration of this agreement in good order, having regard to the present condition of the cable.

12. Nothing in this agreement shall absolve the Company from paying to the Sudan Government the sum of 25 centimes gold per word for all messages to or from the Hejaz passing over the Sudan Government telegraphs.

13. The present agreement has been drawn up in two languages, English and Arabic, and both texts shall have equal validity. But in the event of any dispute arising owing to a divergence between the two texts, such dispute shall be submitted to His Britannic Majesty's Government and the Government of the Hejaz and settled through the usual diplomatic channels.

For and on behalf of the
Hejaz Government:

For and on behalf of the
Sudan Government:

For and on behalf of the
Eastern Telegraph Company (Limited):

[E 4922/366/91]

No. 21.

Vice-Consul Jordan to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received August 23.)

(No. 94.)

Sir,

Jeddah, August 2, 1926.

IN continuation of my despatch No. 93 of yesterday's date, relative to the Port Sudan-Jeddah cable, I have the honour to forward herewith copies of two telegrams that have been received from the Director-General, Sudan Posts and Telegraphs, and the acting superintendent of the Eastern Telegraphs' office at Port Sudan.

These telegrams are self-explanatory.

The attitude of the Sudan Government would appear to show that their representative at the recent conference in Port Sudan has failed to realise that there has been a change of Government in the Hejaz.

During the twelve months or more that I have been in touch with Ibn Saud in my official capacity in Jeddah I have never known him to go back on an undertaking or default in a single payment, and I see no reason for contending that he should do otherwise in the future.

Under the agreement prepared in the Port Sudan Conference, and in no way altered by the revised agreement as submitted under cover of my despatch under reference, the Sudan Government have to receive the sum of 25 centimes gold only in respect of all messages to or from the Hejaz passing over the Sudan Government telegraphs. This amount is payable to them by the Eastern Telegraph Company and not by the Hejaz Government, and therefore the inquietude expressed by the Sudan Government's representative as to the honesty and paying capacity of the Hejaz Government, besides being unjustified in view of my own experience in this country, would appear to be an affair which concerns the Eastern Telegraph Company only.

Also there would appear to be some misunderstanding as to the scope of the Hejaz telegraph system. Jeddah is not the only place in the Hejaz at which telegrams are accepted, and even if the Eastern Telegraph Company had a fully staffed office here they would be unable to collect the money for telegrams accepted at Mecca, Medina, Yanbo, Kufuda and other posts. Consequently the idea of daily settlements as mooted in Mr. Wynne's telegram would not be practicable.

The guarantee asked from the Hejaz authorities would appear to be covered by the fourth article of the agreement relating to the ownership of the cable.

I consider that if the Sudan Government should reopen the question of the division of the cable earnings in the suspense account all hope of ever arriving at a satisfactory settlement of this vexatious question would have to be abandoned.

I cannot express how deeply I regret that the Eastern Telegraph Company should have been led to believe that the present Hejaz Government were likely to default in the matter of the payment of the telegraphic receipts, a fact which I have already pointed out is not borne out by past experience and which is rendered the more unlikely by the friendship existing between His Majesty's Government and Ibn Saud, and the fact of His Majesty's Government being a third and assenting party to the cable division agreement and a signatory of the Lausanne Treaty.

I would point out, moreover, that if the Hejaz authorities are so insistent on not allowing any foreign control over the Government telegraphs, any undue insistence on the part of His Majesty's Government or the Sudan authorities might be liable to misconception and would not be conducive to an efficient and amiable interdepartmental working of this cable in the future, besides perhaps vitiating the declared policy of His Majesty's Government in regard to this country.

I have, &c.

S. R. JORDAN.

Enclosure 1 in No. 21.

Director of Posts and Telegraphs, Khartum, to British Consul, Jeddah.

(Telegraphic.)

July 31, 1926.

WITH reference to your communication to Governor, Port Sudan, number unknown, date about 19th July. Schuster wires from London your communication which was wired to him is first he has heard of proposal that Hejaz Government should work Jeddah end of cable. No information here. This suggestion is contrary to our principal proposal embodied in draft agreement, that Eastern Telegraph Company would work both terminals, which was accepted by British representative at Port Sudan Conference as only satisfactory solution. Presume that there is strong reason for opening discussion on these new lines of Hejaz management of Jeddah terminal following a training period. I am directed to advise you that the Sudan Government would be reluctant to entertain any proposal which includes all complete control of Jeddah terminal by Hejaz in near future. The Sudan Government consider only satisfactory guarantee would be daily handing over of receipts, which would presumably necessitate Eastern having representative permanently at Jeddah. Sudan Government would only be prepared to consider such an arrangement subject to the provision of a full guarantee that the Hejaz Government would meet all liabilities incurred by it after 1st January, 1926. Sudan Government would require to reconsider own position with regard to division of cable earnings in suspense account. I shall be glad to be informed as to progress made with discussion. Do you concur?

Enclosure 2 in No. 21.

Governor, Port Sudan, to British Agent, Jeddah.

(Telegraphic.)

August 1, 1926.

ACTING Superintendent, Eastern Telegraph Company, wrote to you as follows, 29th July:—

"I enclose copy of message received from our head office yesterday. Broadbent is at Asmara, and I am sending him copy by post which takes this. I assume nothing will be done until Broadbent can proceed to Jeddah."

Enclosed telegram from Eastern, London, to Port Sudan:—

"Understand from Sudan authorities here that if Hejaz authorities work and control Jeddah end, latter will collect all money there and former could not agree to this arrangement as they point out difficulties of obtaining payment. We cannot, therefore, agree, and wish you to get in touch with Jordan in the matter."

I am sending copies of all papers to Khartum.

No. 22.

Acting Agent, Jeddah, to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received August 24.)

(No. 78.)

(Telegraphic.)

Jeddah, August 23, 1926.

YOUR telegram of 19th August.

I have explained situation to Ibn Saud and arranged that visit of Faisal should be incognito. King states that as Faisal may not have another opportunity of visiting United Kingdom for some time he should like him to go now.

Departure has been provisionally arranged for 10th September from Port Sudan, and party of six, including [? Minister for Foreign Affairs] and three servants, will travel whole way by sea.

May one of His Majesty's ships in the Red Sea take him to Port Sudan to avoid waiting four days? This would also help to keep up appearances this end.

Presumably Faisal will have an opportunity of meeting His Majesty somewhere in the United Kingdom to convey Ibn Saud's respects and possibly make presentation.

Regret local staff not sufficient to carry on during my absence, and [groups omitted] should be sent here.

Question of expenses disconcerting. If Faisal pays his in England and he is received as a guest in France or Holland, this may affect prestige of His Majesty's Government. I request instructions in this respect.

Are above arrangements convenient, please?

[E 5046/3239/91]

No. 23.

Mr. Wingfield to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received August 30.)

(No. 715. Confidential.)

Sir,

Rome, August 24, 1926.

AS reported in my telegram No. 181 of the 21st instant, I called on Signor Guariglia on the 20th and asked him whether he could tell me anything of the visit to Sanaa which formed the subject of your despatch No. 1113 of the 10th instant. I explained that we were naturally much interested in anything that concerned so near a neighbour as the Imam of Yemen, and that we should much appreciate any information as to whether negotiations were going on between him and the Italian mission reported to be visiting him.

2. Signor Guariglia said that Italy, too, was a neighbour of the Imam's, and that the Governor of Eritrea was consequently going to Sanaa on a friendly visit, not on a "mission." He could not tell me more without consulting the Ministry of the Colonies, but he would communicate with them and let me know their reply.

3. Later in the afternoon Signor Guariglia telephoned to say that the Ministry of the Colonies were publishing a communiqué in the newspapers of the following morning, and that I should there see the reply to my enquiry.

4. I have the honour to enclose herein a translation of this communiqué, which merely states that the Governor of Eritrea is paying a visit of courtesy to the Imam. There is, however, nothing to show whether he is or is not negotiating a treaty with his host.

5. On the 23rd instant I took the opportunity of another visit to Signor Guariglia to thank him for the information conveyed to me by this communiqué,

from which, I said, I understood that the Governor was only paying a friendly visit and that no negotiations were on foot.

6. Signor Guariglia merely answered that, as I had seen, it was a visit of courtesy.

I have, &c.

C. J. WINGFIELD.

Enclosure in No. 23.

Translation of Article in the "Messaggero" of August 21, 1926.

THE Governor of Eritrea has for some days been on a visit of courtesy to the Imam of Yemen. He left Massana on the "Archimede" and landed at Hodeida on the 12th August. On the 14th he proceeded to Sanaa, capital of Yemen, where he will remain some days. The authorities of Yemen gave the representative of the Italian Government the most cordial and friendly reception.

[E 5064/20/91]

No. 24.

Vice-Consul Jordan to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 97.)

Sir,

Jeddah, August 11, 1926.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 75 of to-day's date, I have the honour to forward herewith a précis of the article published in the Mecca newspaper, "Um-ul-Kura," refuting any intention on the part of His Majesty the King of the Hejaz to destroy the Prophet's Tomb at Medina.

(Copies to India, Egypt, Jerusalem, Bagdad, Khartum and Singapore.)

I have, &c.

S. R. JORDAN.

Enclosure in No. 24.

Précis of an Article published in the Mecca Newspaper, "Um-ul-Kura," No. 86, of August 6, 1926.

The House of the Prophet and His Tomb are in Protection and Safety.

UNDER the above heading, the article states that certain intriguers have, for selfish aims and personal motives, fabricated and circulated a rumour to the effect that the Nedj people have demolished the Tomb and the House of the Prophet. Such news disturbed the Moslem world, but when it appeared that the news was false they blamed themselves for what they had done.

Now these intriguers are trying to spread news, especially in India, to the effect that the Nedj people are intending to demolish the House and the Tomb of the Prophet, as if they were qualified to know what is going to happen in the future, or as if they had knowledge of what is in other people's minds. They could not say this time "demolished," as they did before, because people would readily realise that they were liars. So they tried to put it in another way. But let everybody who wants to be aware of the facts ask us, and he will get a distinct reply with sufficient proof.

His Majesty the King has more than once stated that he is prepared to sacrifice his properties, his soul and his sons for the House and the Tomb of the Prophet.

Whatever is mentioned in the Kuran, the Traditions of the Prophet and the books of the four imams, Malek, Es-Shaffi, Abu Hanifa and Ahmed, will be carried out, and whatever contradicts the above will be refused and rejected.

It was decided at the Moslem Conference that any dispute should be referred to a committee of learned men, Moslem ulemas, and settled on the authorities above quoted.

It concludes by asking, "What more do people want from us?" and "What is this freedom they claim but to disobey God?"

[E 5065/7/91]

No. 25.

Mr. Henderson to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 557. Secret.)

Sir,

Ramleh, August 21, 1926.

EMIR SAUD, the eldest son of the King of the Hejaz, arrived at Cairo about a week ago in order to undergo a course of eye treatment. Together with his large suite, including the Egyptian Sheikh Hafez Wahba, adviser to Ibn Saud's Government, he is lodged in a house rented by the Egyptian Government.

2. The Prince was received in audience by King Fuad on the 18th instant. As I was received myself by the King on the following day, I asked His Majesty whether any political importance was to be attached to the visit. Would it, for instance, I said, terminate in the recognition by the Egyptian Government of Ibn Saud as King of the Hejaz?

3. King Fuad, while hinting at the possibility of ulterior motives on the part of Ibn Saud, said that he was determined that the visit should have no political significance. He had confined his conversation the day before to polite civilities. On Hafez Wahba subsequently expressing through the Grand Chamberlain the desire for a private audience, he had caused him to be informed that he saw no object for this. His Majesty added, with considerable emphasis, that there could be no question for the moment of recognition. The Mahmal incident was of too recent occurrence, nor had there yet been time to study the various reports on the subject. The King's attitude was so decided in this respect that I considered that it would serve no useful purpose to press the point raised in your despatch No. 780 of the 30th June last.

4. Moreover, His Majesty continued, he had no belief in the permanence of the present régime in the Hejaz. Ibn Saud, in consequence of his fanaticism, was becoming more and more unpopular. He had alienated the sympathies of even the Indian delegates to the Islamic Conference at Mecca, while Persia had been so incensed at the destruction of the sacred tombs that she had contemplated, if she could have found an ally, actually declaring war on the Wahabites.

5. In King Fuad's opinion there was only one solution for the Hejaz, namely, an Egyptian Governor on the same lines as for the Sudan. The Egyptian army was too large for the needs of Egypt, and two battalions might with advantage be sent to Jeddah to keep order there. No other system would so surely guarantee the satisfactory control of the pilgrimages. He foresaw the closest co-operation for many years to come between England and Egypt. As the greatest Moslem Power, Great Britain should be the principal beneficiary of a régime which would ensure a well-ordered, sanitary and peaceful Haj.

6. There was, His Majesty added, another very important consideration. There was no place in the world more favourable than the Hejaz as a basis for the spread of Bolshevism and other theories. Pilgrims came from and returned to all countries and propaganda skilfully administered was thus very widely dispersed. Religious enthusiasm, greatly accentuated at such a time, rendered the minds of believers particularly receptive to perverse doctrines. The Russians, Turks and Germans were paying great attention to the possibilities of the Hejaz in this respect. In his opinion, the King concluded, the Hejaz, after Moscow, was the most dangerous centre for Bolshevism and, after observing parenthetically that he had never desired and never would agree to be chosen as Caliph, he asked me what were the views of His Majesty's Government on the subject.

7. I told King Fuad that it seemed to me that there was very great force in his appreciation of the dangers of the Hejaz as a distributing centre for Bolshevism and other propaganda. His Majesty's Government were most desirous that the pilgrimage should be undertaken in security and under healthy conditions, but that, so far as any future régime in the Hejaz was concerned, they felt that this was a matter for Moslems to decide for themselves. It was primarily a religious question and, as such and in accordance with their traditional principles, not one in which His Majesty's Government would be willing to intervene.

8. King Fuad's remarks were of considerable significance, and I venture to draw your attention to the confirmation which they afford of the information contained in your secret despatch No. 1237 of the 12th November last.

I have, &c.

NEVILLE HENDERSON,

Acting High Commissioner.

No. 26.

Sir Victor Wellesley (for the Secretary of State) to Mr. Jordan (Jeddah).

[By Admiralty Wireless.]

(No. 57.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Foreign Office, September 2, 1926.

YOUR telegram No. 78 of 23rd August: Visit of Amir Feisal.

Admiralty are being asked to arrange if possible for man-of-war to convey party from Jeddah to Port Sudan.

Mr. Mayers has been ordered to proceed from Beirut to take charge of agency during your absence. If he does not arrive before your departure you must arrange for present staff to carry on in the meantime.

Question of expenses is under consideration and a further telegram will be addressed to you shortly.

No. 27.

Mr. Wingfield to Sir Austen Chamberlain. (Received September 8.)

(No. 194.)

(Telegraphic.) Secret.

Rome, September 7, 1926.

MY telegram No. 181.

Secretary-General of Ministry for Foreign Affairs informed me that a telegram was received this morning from the Governor of Eritrea, who had just concluded a treaty of friendship with the Imam of Yemen. Its aims are economic, and it will tend to preserve peace in those regions. Italy has, however, been compelled to undertake to recognise the Imam as King of Yemen.

No other Power is aware of its conclusion, which will not be announced until full text has been received.

[E 5242/2660/91]

No. 28.

Sir Austen Chamberlain to Mr. Wingfield (Rome).

(No. 1257.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 13, 1926.

WITH reference to your telegram No. 194, Secret, of the 7th September, I transmit to you herewith copies of a memorandum on the subject of the Imam-Idrisi conflict in Arabia, and its reaction on British and Italian interests in the Red Sea, which was communicated to the Italian Ambassador by Sir William Tyrrell on the 9th September. I enclose at the same time a copy of Sir William's record of his conversation with the Marquis della Torretta.

2. These papers will suffice to make clear to you the somewhat delicate situation that has arisen. They are for your information only, and I do not desire you to take any action in the matter. If the question is referred to in conversation at the Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs, you should confine yourself to emphasising my preference for a frank discussion with Signor Mussolini of all questions that threaten to disturb the intimate and friendly relations between the two countries, and my confidence that the explanations contained in the memorandum handed to the Italian Ambassador will result in averting any possible misunderstanding in regard to Arabian affairs.

3. I shall be glad to receive at an early date any further information you may be able to obtain regarding the Italian treaty with the Imam, referred to in your telegram under reference, and particularly regarding the implications of Italian recognition of the Imam as King of the Yemen. The Imam, as you are aware, claims sovereignty over the Aden Protectorate and is already in occupation of certain frontier areas.

I am, &c.

AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN.

Enclosure 1 in No. 28.

Memorandum on the Imam-Idrisi Conflict in Arabia.

HIS Majesty's Government have been of late increasingly exercised by the development of the conflict in the Red Sea between the Idrisi of Asir and the Imam of the Yemen, for, owing to their peculiar relations with these two Arab rulers, they are inevitably interested in the progress of the struggle. Realising that Italy claims to have an interest in events in that part of the world, His Majesty's Government feel sure that the Italian Government will share their view that, in the hope of reconciling conflicting interests where such apparently exist, the two Governments should endeavour to understand and, when necessary, frankly discuss their interests in Arabian affairs, more especially in regard to their relations with the various Arab rulers. Animated by these feelings, they think it opportune to explain to the Italian Government their special interest in the Idrisi-Imam conflict.

2. His Majesty's Government would have greatly preferred to disinterest themselves entirely in the Idrisi-Imam conflict. Unfortunately, they are unable to do so. On the one hand, their relations with the Imam are unsatisfactory, this ruler being in occupation of portions of the Aden Protectorate. On the other, they signed an agreement with the Idrisi in January 1917, by which they undertook to protect the Farsan Islands and the Idrisi's seaboard from all hostile action, without any interference on their part with his affairs and independence. Further, His Majesty's Government agreed, in return for his engagement to preclude the interference of any foreign Power in his territory, to afford him the requisite help in arms and ammunition during the war then in progress and afterwards. The fact that His Majesty's Government were specially interested in the Farsan Islands had been shown even earlier, when in 1916 the British flag had been hoisted on the islands for a short time on behalf of the Idrisi. This was specifically explained to Prince Borghese of the Italian Embassy in London on the 29th January, 1917.

3. In the early stages of the Idrisi's conflict with the Imam, His Majesty's Government, in the hope of localising and arresting the development of hostilities, proposed in May 1925 to extend to the territories of the Idrisi and of the Imam the embargo on the export of war material which had already been instituted in the case of the Hedjaz-Nejd war. This proposal was accepted by the Italian, French and Belgian Governments.

4. The embargo, however, proved ineffective, and, moreover, called forth protests from various quarters. The Idrisi, on his side, complained that the Imam was obtaining military supplies from Italian sources, and that His Majesty's Government's effective enforcement of the embargo imposed a serious and unfair disadvantage on him. Meantime, a British syndicate, which had for several years been negotiating with the Idrisi for concessions in the Farsan Islands and other parts of his territory, protested to His Majesty's Government that the embargo discriminated unfairly against British trade, since indirectly it enabled the Imam to absorb the Idrisi's territory. Moreover, the Idrisi himself refused to confirm the concessions to the syndicate unless he were supplied by the syndicate with ammunition, the export of which from Great Britain His Majesty's Government declined to sanction.

5. It was in short becoming evident that, while the Idrisi was not allowed to acquire from British sources the means of defending himself against his rival the Imam, the latter was obtaining from sources other than British the material that enabled him to extend his encroachments on the territory of the Idrisi, and that the Imam was threatening to seize the Farsan Islands, which had never previously formed part of his territories, and which, under the agreement with the Idrisi, already mentioned, His Majesty's Government had undertaken to protect.

6. His Majesty's Government have recently reviewed the whole situation in Arabia, and, in consideration of the present position of Ibn Saud, decided that they could no longer refuse permission to that ruler to obtain supplies of war material from this country. And since it was evident that the Imam was obtaining, from some source, adequate supplies of war material, His Majesty's Government, having regard to the terms of their agreement with the Idrisi, felt that they must extend permission to obtain arms and ammunition in this country to the Idrisi as well as to Ibn Saud.

7. His Majesty's Government feel confident that from the foregoing statement of facts the Italian Government will appreciate the position. They are anxious to

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make it clear, because reports have reached them from various quarters to the effect that the Imam is being actively encouraged, if not actually supported, by Italian interests in his conflict with the Idrisi. A situation might thus easily arise where the Idrisi-Imam conflict might develop into a clash between Italian and British interests, even producing a political reaction in the relations of the two countries. It is to prevent such a possibility that this present communication is addressed by His Majesty's Government to the Italian Government.

8. Economic competition is both natural and beneficial, but there are obvious dangers in a situation where European commercial competition is identified with Arab political rivalry.

9. His Majesty's Government are sure that Signor Mussolini will appreciate, as much as they do, these potential dangers, and will realise the desirability of averting them by means of a complete and frank understanding between the Italian and British Governments. The safety of imperial communications with India and the East is not a matter which His Majesty's Government can afford to neglect; that is a fundamental principle of secular British policy. His Majesty's Government do not doubt that the Italian Government will understand the importance which therefore attaches, in the view of His Majesty's Government, to this question of the Farsan Islands, and will appreciate that the sole reason which actuates them in explaining their position, in the most friendly spirit, to the Italian Government at the present juncture is the desire to prevent an embarrassing and delicate situation from developing later.

Enclosure 2 in No. 28.

Record of Conversation between Sir W. Tyrrell and the Marquis della Torretta.

I ASKED the Italian Ambassador to call to-day, and I took advantage of the receipt of Mr. Wingfield's telegram No. 194 of the 7th instant to thank his Excellency for the courtesy of his Government in communicating to us the news that a treaty of friendship had been concluded between Italy and the Imam of Yemen.

I told the Ambassador that I would take advantage of this opportunity to speak to him on the relations between the Imam of the Yemen and the Idrisi of Asir, who had come into conflict in the Red Sea, since it was our sincere desire to confine the struggle to its proper sphere and prevent its development in any way impairing the good relations between our two countries, to which we all attached the utmost importance.

I reminded his Excellency that, if this practice which we were now adopting had been followed in the past, many disagreements might have been avoided between European countries, who had frequently become involved in heated and painful arguments into which they had been dragged by the action of local chiefs and officials. I repeated that I could not sufficiently emphasise your desire to invite a frank expression of views on the subject by his Excellency's Government in order that we might succeed in convincing these Arab chiefs that they would be unable to embroil our relations, however much they might desire to fight each other on the spot.

I handed to his Excellency the accompanying memorandum, in which he would find the views of His Majesty's Government with regard to the conflict between the two Arab sultans.

The Marquis Torretta thanked me for this proof of friendship and loyalty. He promised to acquaint his Government without delay with our views, and he did not anticipate any divergence of views on their part. He was convinced they would highly appreciate the spirit which animated Sir Austen Chamberlain in seeking a frank explanation with a view to prevent an embarrassing and delicate situation from developing out of this local struggle.

September 9, 1926.

[E 5369/2660/91]

No. 29.

Extract from Despatch to Rome, No. 1270, of September 13, 1926.

M. GRANDI next spoke of the communication which Sir William Tyrrell had made to the Marquis Torretta about the quarrel between the Idrisi and the Imam. Here again M. Grandi assured me that M. Mussolini had no intention of pursuing an anti-British policy. He desired in all things to be frank and open with us. Italy was, of course, deeply interested in that part of the world on account of her "poor little colony" of Eritrea, but anything like an opposition to Great Britain was wholly antagonistic to the Duce's ideas.

I told him that it was in this spirit that we had made our communication. We, of course, were also deeply interested in that part of the world as was the Indian Government, and our Colonial Ministry. At a certain moment I had felt that as one party was giving arms to the Imam and the other to the Idrisi, the quarrel between these chiefs was in danger of leading to a serious misunderstanding between ourselves, and I had therefore at once decided to lay the whole position before the Italian Government so that any such misfortune might be avoided.

[E 5285/7/91]

No. 30.

Vice-Consul Jordan to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received September 14.)

(No. 98.)

Sir,

Jeddah, August 19, 1926.

I HAVE the honour to confirm my telegram No. 77 of the 15th instant and my semi-official telegram to Mr. Oliphant of the same date, relative to the proposed visit of the Emir Feisul to the United Kingdom, France and Holland to officially thank the heads of these countries for their recognition of his father's control over the Hejaz, and to enclose herewith a translation of the letter I have received from His Majesty the King requesting that I should accompany his son, the Emir, if possible.

I am informed that the Emir Feisul will be accompanied by a suite of not more than six persons, of whom one will be the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dr. Abdullah Bey Damluji.

They hope to spend about one month in England, and then proceed to Holland and France and possibly Turkey upon the return journey.

It is also rumoured locally that, whilst in England, Emir Feisul will inaugurate a Mahometan Church, but I have no details of this matter to date.

I have, &c.

S. R. JORDAN.

Enclosure in No. 30.

Abdul Aziz-bin-Abdul Rahman-al-Feisul-al-Saud to the Acting British Agent and Consul, Jeddah, dated 7.2.1345 (August 15, 1926).

(Translation.)

(After respects.)

AS we have determined to send our son and representative Feisul shortly to England and to some of the European capitals for some official duty, it will be a pleasure to me if you can accompany him in case you have nothing to prevent you.

(With best greetings.)

Acting Consul Jordan to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received September 14.)

(No. 100.)

Sir,

Jeddah, August 26, 1926.

I HAVE the honour to enclose herewith my report on the 1926 pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina.

Copies of this report are being sent to India, Singapore, Cairo and Khartum.

I have, &c.

S. R. JORDAN.

Enclosure in No. 31.

Pilgrimage Report, 1926.

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1. INTRODUCTORY.

DURING the pilgrimage just completed an effort has been made by myself and the newly-appointed Permanent Pilgrimage Officer, Munshi Ihsanullah, to note and examine the many and various forms of abuse to which the hapless pilgrims are being subjected by the more unscrupulous of the pilgrim guides and Government officials, and to devise ways and means of preventing such abuses at once, or at least assuring as far as possible that there should be no repetition of these same abuses next year.

As will readily be realised, the task is a big one, and previous attempts have been restricted by considerations for the pilgrim, looked upon as a helpless sort of individual suffering temporarily from a form of religious mania which causes him to resent official interference in any form.

This has not been borne out by the experiences of the present season, and since the completion of the Haj the agency has been besieged with all sorts and descriptions of pilgrims airing their grievances and demanding the punishment of the persons concerned. Without exception, they have been profuse in their thanks and gratitude for services rendered.

In this respect I must remark that Ibn Saud and the Hejaz authorities have loyally co-operated, and there are at present a number of mutawwifs (pilgrim guides) in the Mecca prisons in virtue of complaints made against them by this agency.

One mutawwif, who robbed thirty pilgrims of most of their belongings, including their return tickets, and thereupon fled away, has been condemned to have both his hands cut off when apprehended.

I have also refrained from granting visas to proceed to India or other British territory to any mutawwif against whom a complaint has been made by the pilgrims, and this in itself should prove an effective way of checking their depredations, as a great many annually proceed to India and other places to collect victims for the following season.

To a great extent the fault lies with the Indian pilgrim passport and return ticket systems. This has already been pointed out in many of this agency's despatches, but will bear repetition in this report, and I am giving many examples to show how prevalent the practice of thieving passports and return tickets really

is, but more particularly the latter, and I can but hope that the administrations concerned will realise the necessity of compulsory deposits by pilgrims of all grades and also the necessity of photographs on passports.

The passports issued by the Hejaz authorities in Mecca bear photographs, and this fact should be equivalent to a fully fledged fetva to authorise a similar practice in other Moslem countries.

Special interest has been added to this season's pilgrimage by the fact that it was the first since Mecca, and, indeed, the whole of the Hejaz has come under Wahabi domination, and the fact of the World's Moslem Conference being held in Mecca both prior to and after the Haj also lent an additional interest.

This conference attracted many of the leading lights of Islam to Mecca during the pilgrimage, and they have been able to see for themselves exactly what goes on and the abuses to which the pilgrims are subjected, and I anticipate that their opposition to proposed legislation to better the lot of the hapless pilgrim, which has in the past been due chiefly to their ignorance of the real facts coupled with calculated obstructionist methods, will be modified and in some cases actually withdrawn in the future.

Another great source of abuse, and one that could be readily and easily removed, is the fact that the two principal shipping agencies of the lines carrying Indian pilgrims is given to a local Jedawi merchant, who loses no opportunity of making money over and above his legal commission.

Actually, return ticket holders are at a disadvantage with persons who come with single tickets and have sufficient money to buy a ticket for the return journey in Jeddah, because the agents are quite aware that the return tickets have been paid for and do not hesitate to keep the holders in Jeddah sometimes for weeks if they can sell sufficient tickets to fill the ship, thereby cutting out competition.

Another vile practice which is extensively practised is the system adopted by the agents in refusing to book pilgrims for the ships that are lying in the harbour until the town is full and everybody anxious to get away. Then booking is opened, and as the demand is greater than the supply premiums are demanded and paid for preferential booking.

Once more it is the poorer pilgrims that suffer, and many actually die of starvation in the streets of Jeddah.

This trouble could be easily avoided if the various Governments insisted on British agents for British pilgrim ships or ships carrying British pilgrims, and the agencies taken away from the ruthless and unscrupulous Arabs, to whom every form of vice and corruption where the pilgrims are concerned has been developed to such an extent as to be almost second nature.

The adoption of the compulsory deposit system only, suitable passports with photographs, and the appointment of honest, straightforward agents by the shipping companies would go far to alleviate a great many of the inconveniences at present suffered by the pilgrims.

Quarantine arrangements for this pilgrimage at Kamaran, Suakim, and Tor seem to have been adequate, and even though no sanitary measures whatever were taken by the Hejaz authorities, no serious outbreak of disease occurred. For this lack of organisation the local authorities plead insufficient time and funds, which is to an extent true. Owing to the Hejaz now having become a signatory of the International Sanitary Convention recently drawn up at Paris, it is hoped that in the future there will be no serious hitches in the quarantine measures to be enforced during the pilgrim season, and that the Hejaz will be free to look to the organisation of a sanitary service sufficient to effectively preserve the health of the pilgrims when within the Hejaz itself.

Public security has never been better, and, in fact, it has previously been considered that such a state of security was quite impossible of realisation in the Hejaz. However, not a single case of robbery or attack has been reported to this agency by the pilgrims either between Jeddah and Mecca or this latter and Medina and the return journey therefrom. This is a great advance upon even the Turkish régime in this country and must constitute a "record."

Transport to Mecca was by motor car and camel, the latter predominating, and to Medina by camel alone. There was a sufficiency provided, and only just before the exodus to Arafat and Muna was any shortage noticed, and consequently a number of persons missed making the Haj thereby. This was due to extraordinary circumstances not wholly the fault of the Government, and the causes are set out hereunder.

Food-stuffs were plentiful and moderately cheap, but water in Mecca was for a time scanty and bad owing to the invading masses of Nedjis stopping the Ain Zebadah supply for their own and their animals' needs. In Jeddah a recently constructed condenser supplies all that is required.

The Mahmal incident fortunately did not develop seriously, and it would appear as if the Mahmal and escort has made its last appearance in the Hejaz.

The Government are making fulsome promises of great organisation for the next pilgrimage, having now had, so they say, actual experience, thereby gaining knowledge of the requirements of the situation. Whether these will materialise or not only time can tell, but there are indications of a more reasonable and sensible policy than ever appear to have existed in the time of Hussein.

The destruction of tombs was a great blow to the more orthodox Moslems, but surprisingly little was said about it except for the persons belonging to the Shiah sect, who complained most bitterly.

It would appear from the observations I have been able to gather from returning pilgrims that the tenets of the Wahabi faith are not now regarded as being so wholly impossible as was at first thought, and many go so far as to say that they represent a perfectly true and literal translation of the Koranic teachings.

2. STATISTICS.

The number of pilgrims arriving by sea from the various countries were as follows:—

Country.	Number.
India	24,331
British Malaya	9,608
Dutch East Indies	2,097
East Africa	484
Egypt	16,750
Sudan	1,530
Syria	458
Southern Arabia (Aden, Mokalla, Hodeidah)	326
Total	55,584

The nationalities of these pilgrims were:—

Nationality.	Number.
India	18,937
British Malays	5,500 approx.
Dutch Malays	5,110 approx.
Bukharis	1,470
Afghans	2,445
Hadramies	360
Turks	157
Yemenies	565
Sudanese (including West Africans)	1,377
Egyptian	16,094
Iraqis	199
Syrians	499
French Somaliland	215
Muscats	213
Moghrabies	115
South African	1
Persians	475
Zanzibaris	7
Chinese	66
Nedjis	9
Hejazis	1,729
Palestinians	168
Senegalese	14
Total	55,725

The difference of 143 between the totals given above is due to small discrepancies in the details drawn from the various sources, governmental, shipping and quarantine, and also to the fact that a number of persons employed on the pilgrim ships were discharged locally and made the Haj. Persons who came to Jeddah by dhow are not included in the shipping returns.

Shipping Statistics.

The number of pilgrims carried in ships of the different nationalities were as follows:—

Nationality of ship.	Number of pilgrims carried.
British	51,343
Dutch	2,087
Italian	487
Egyptian	1,089
Greek	578
Total	55,584

It will, of course, be understood that many of the ships engaged in the carrying trade made several voyages and the following table gives the number of ships actually employed during the season:—

Nationality.	Number.
British	29
Dutch	12
Italian	4
Egyptian	2
Greek	2
Total	49

The official estimation of the number of pilgrims at Arafat on the first day of the Haj, *i.e.*, the 20th June last, was 120,000. This information was conveyed to the agency telegraphically by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, but independent eye-witnesses who were present state that the number did not exceed 100,000.

With 55,725 from overseas this leaves a total of approximately 45,000 from the interior of Arabia of which it is estimated that at least 30,000 were Nedjis, who came in masses upon camels to assist at the ceremony. The general term Nedjis includes all the Arabs within Ibn Saud's jurisdiction and comprises the Ibn Rashid country and the vassal States along the Persian Gulf.

The remainder was made up of Hejazis properly speaking, that is to say, residents of Mecca, Jeddah and Medina, and the desert Bedouins, the latter mostly camel drivers, and a number of pilgrims from the Asir and other States neighbouring on the Hejaz and Nedj.

It also includes an indeterminate number of North Africans who cross the Red Sea by dhow and land at any convenient spot on the Arabian coast, generally south of Jeddah, and proceed to Mecca on foot.

The number of pilgrims from overseas this season shows a big decrease on the years 1923 and 1924, and corresponds roughly to the 1922 pilgrimage, as the following list will show:—

Year.	Number.
1922	56,319
1923	75,221
1924	92,707
1925 ... ..	...
1926	55,725

For the season of 1925, owing to the state of hostilities existing between the Sherceefian régime and Ibn Saud, the pilgrimage was practically nil as far as overseas pilgrims were concerned, as Jeddah, the principal port of the Hejaz was all that remained in the Sherceefian hands and it was closely besieged by Ibn Saud's forces and effectively closed from a pilgrimage point of view. A number of pilgrims, not exceeding 3,000, did come from India, and, after running the blockade at Rabigh, entered that port and proceeded from there to Mecca.

Jeddah eventually fell into Ibn Saud's hands on the 22nd December, 1925, and the way to Mecca has been open since that date.

The reasons for such a small pilgrimage this season are many, the greatest of which perhaps is that, as there was practically no pilgrimage during 1925 and hostilities were still in progress until December of that year, many pilgrims, who prepare for months before to make the Haj, had given up all hope of being able to proceed to the Hejaz this year.

This applies particularly to the Malays, both Dutch and British, who generally leave their homes many months before the actual date of the Haj in order to pass the fast of Ramadan in the Holy Country; some considering, in fact, that this procedure is necessary if one is to obtain all the heavenly compensations attached to the performance of the pilgrimage.

3. SHIPPING.

As will be seen from the figures set out above, 51,343 pilgrims out of a total of 55,584 were carried in British ships, which must be considered highly satisfactory. This represents over 92 per cent. of all the pilgrims.

The lines chiefly interested were the Mogul Line, the Persian Gulf Steam Navigation Company, and the Nemazie Line from India, the Blue Funnel and Nemazie Lines from Singapore, and the Khedivial Mail Steamship Company from Egypt and the Sudan, in conjunction with several steamers of the Mogul Line, which were chartered by this company for the purpose during the time they would have otherwise been lying idle in Jeddah harbour.

Of the various shipping companies concerned, complaints were received in respect of the Nemazie Line only, and in view of the frequency and the nature of the complaints against this company in past years and reiterated again this season the various authorities ought seriously to consider the advisability of forbidding the ships of this line to carry pilgrims.

For the second time within three years they have come insufficiently provided with doctors for the return journey, and on each occasion applied to this agency for a certificate to allow them to proceed. In the case of the steamship "Sarvistan" I gave a certificate as requested, but instructed the captain to put in at Aden and secure the services of a doctor at that port if possible. As there were none available he was later instructed by wireless to proceed to India direct. I expressly stated in the certificate that the action of this agency in permitting him to sail with one doctor short did not in any way prejudice the right of the Indian Government to prosecute the company for failing to comply with the shipping regulations, and I hope that such action has been taken and the company fined for their negligence.

The ships of this company are dirty, and the only cases of cholera that occurred broke out on one of the ships of this line that sailed from Calcutta.

Several complaints were received from the pilgrims of the insufficiency of water provided on the various ships, but I am inclined to consider that these complaints arose not because the pilgrims were issued with less than the regulation ration, but because they could not draw it in such small quantities and at all or such times of the day as was most convenient to their individual requirements.

The water on the Nemazie steamers is not controlled, and the pilgrims are allowed to draw whatever they require at all hours of the day or night, and it has been found that less is consumed in this manner than when the ration of 1 gallon per day is served out at stated intervals.

There is no doubt whatever that the practice of allowing pilgrims to bring and cook their own food on board the pilgrim ships is conducive to extreme filthiness. The whole of the pilgrim quarters is littered with food-stuffs, including vegetables in a more or less advanced state of putridity, and a mass of cooking utensils which, as no hot water is available, are invariably in a greasy and malodorous condition.

The danger of fire breaking out on the ship has also to be considered, as with the multiplicity of small wood fires and primus stoves all over the upper deck, the former giving off sparks and the latter occasionally bursting, it is to be wondered why more accidents do not occur.

Whilst there are many objections to the feeding of pilgrims by the shipping companies, and the pilgrims being allowed to bring only their clothes and purely personal effects on board, it is nevertheless a question which will have to be considered in the near future, and the sooner a decision is taken to this effect the sooner will

pilgrim ships become less filthy and odoriferous and liable to foment diseases amongst the pilgrims.

The Dutch authorities have adopted this system with regard to all pilgrims from the Dutch East Indies, and there is a great difference between the cleanliness of their ships and those carrying pilgrims who are allowed to provide and cook their own food.

Upon arrival in Jeddah the ships of the Blue Funnel Line do not allow the dhowmen and the coolies who transport the pilgrims ashore to come on board the steamer, and the crew of these steamers serve the winches and attend to the disembarkation of the pilgrims' luggage into the dhows alongside. The pilgrims also assist and afterwards file down the gangway into the dhows containing their respective luggage and go ashore.

The ships of the other lines, as soon as the quarantine flag is lowered, become overrun with a mass of great hulking negroes employed by the dhowmen, each seizing luggage here and there and hurrying with it into their respective dhows. This is productive of absolute chaos, and the pilgrims become separated from their baggage and each other, and generally lose some of their effects. A certain amount to regulate this custom has been done locally, but it could be more effectively legislated for by the various authorities, who should oblige the companies to disembark the pilgrims' luggage with the crew of the ship, and not to allow these local boatmen on board at all.

A further point of great interest, and one that should be remedied immediately, is the practice of the shipping companies having local Jedawi merchants as agents in Jeddah. I have already been obliged to draw the attention of His Britannic Majesty's Government and the Indian Government to this unfortunate state of affairs, and every day complaints of ill or rude treatment and corruption are being brought to my notice.

It has been most unfortunate that the agent of the Mogul Line and the Nemazie Line should have been at the same time the Governor of Jeddah. As such he can practically do as he likes, and is most despotic and absurdly stupid and pigheaded in his official capacity if it in any way affects his private pocket. Instances are many, and the following are but a few:—

1. The case of a Madrassi, a son of a member of the Viceroy's Council, proceeded to the agent above mentioned to keep an appointment. When he presented himself at the offices he was told to go away by a servant outside the door. He endeavoured to explain in broken Arabic that he had an appointment with the agent, but whilst so doing was seized by the servant and thrown down a flight of four or five steps leading up from the street. Getting up he once more endeavoured to explain, but the result was the same. A number of Sindi and other Indian pilgrims, who had no connection whatever with the Madrassi, resented the ill-treatment meted out to him and so seized the servant and gave him a thrashing. The agent thereupon assumed his official capacity and ordered the Madrassi, who had been the least inoffensive person throughout the whole proceedings, to be imprisoned, not in the detention barracks, but in the criminal prison. As soon as knowledge of this came to me I sent the pilgrimage officer to ask for the man's release. This was refused in a very rude and abrupt manner, and the pilgrim officer was informed that the Governor cared neither for the Indians or the British, and that the man was to be severely punished. I, myself, thereupon paid the Governor a visit and endeavoured to arrive at an amicable settlement, but finding this impossible, officially demanded the man's release, and that he should be handed over to me. This also was curtly refused, but I am pleased to say that when I rang up the King and referred the matter to him he ordered the man to be handed over to me, and he was soon after brought along under police escort. I pressed the King for an enquiry in order that the guilty might be punished, but without avail.

2. These agents never commence booking a steamer until the day before she is due to sail or until the town is full of pilgrims. Then as the supply of places in the ship is sadly inferior to the demand it is common practice to intimate that a premium of 10 or 15 rupees will secure preferential booking. The help of the mutawwifs is solicited in this respect, and the amount of money so collected must amount to thousands of rupees. Naturally it is the poorer pilgrims who again suffer, and, their money becoming exhausted owing to the long wait thus forced upon them, many die of starvation in the streets.

3. Owing to the competition of the Shushtary Line, also represented by an Arab merchant, a determined effort was made by the agent of the Mogul and Nemazie

Lines to induce the pilgrims who travelled to Jeddah in the ships of the first named to return by their steamers, thus enabling them to claim the deposits made in India. Fair competition is to be commended, but once more the official capacity of the agent comes to his rescue, and in that capacity he called a meeting of the sheikhs of the mutawwifs, and, amongst other things, intimated that if they did not bring the pilgrims who travelled by the Shushtary Line to his offices to book their return passages, they, the mutawwifs, could expect no particular privileges in future, and would be most severely dealt with in case any complaints were made against them by the pilgrims or the foreign representatives. Consequently a great number were secured in this way, and they were placed on the steamers first, the return ticket holders and a number of persons who had made deposits and travelled by the Mogul and Nemazie Lines being compelled to wait for later steamers. Some of these were in great poverty, and the delay caused them much suffering.

4. These agents, on advice from the direction of the Nemazie Company no doubt, kept 870 Malay pilgrims lying in Jeddah until forty-two days after the Haj, despite the fact that one of the Nemazie steamers was lying idle in harbour for some fifteen days awaiting the last of the Indian pilgrims from Medina. Eventually after strong representations from this agency, the agents on behalf of the owners distributed food to the destitute of this number and a little charity was issued from the relief funds in the possession of this agency. After the agents had vainly endeavoured to persuade these persons or a large number of them to return to British Malaya via Bombay and entraining across India at their own expense, I advised the agents that unless the pilgrims were shipped direct to Singapore and Penang immediately I should hold them liable and see that they were prosecuted for breach of contract. Thereupon the steamship "Armenistan," which had also arrived in harbour took the pilgrims on board and sailed direct.

5. A party of about twenty pilgrims who had first-class tickets were obliged to sail as deck passengers on the steamship "Akbar," and before being allowed to do so the agents insisted on declarations from them that they were travelling as such voluntarily, and they were in consequence of this debarred from claiming a refund of the difference in the fare upon arrival in India.

6. Another practice of the agents is to give preference to persons who buy tickets in Jeddah for the voyage to India to the exclusion and detriment of return-ticket holders and persons having made deposits. This is particularly so with first and second class passengers. Owing to this practice, about 550 return-ticket holders were held up in Jeddah for some three weeks, during which time many of them suffered greatly from exposure and starvation, some in fact dying.

The above are but a few of the many evils practised by the agents of the Mogul and Nemazie Lines, more particularly in regard to the steamers of the latter line, and I would strongly recommend that the authorities concerned should insist upon British agents for both these lines in Jeddah, thereby abolishing at one stroke a great many of the abuses to which the pilgrim is subjected.

There is in Jeddah a branch house of the firm of Gellatly, Hankey, Limited, who are the agents for the Mogul Line in Port Sudan, and who, as agents for the Khedivial Mail Line of steamers in the Hejaz, handled 16,000 pilgrims from Egypt with expedition and to the complete satisfaction of their principals and of the pilgrims themselves; so if the Mogul and Nemazie Lines plead that there is no suitable house in Jeddah to take up their agency it is a distortion of the true facts of the case.

I should add that the Dutch authorities insist on a Dutch agent for all steamers, irrespective of nationality, carrying Dutch pilgrims, and this is a lead that might with advantage be followed.

4. QUARANTINE.

The usual quarantine stations at Kamaran, Suakim and Tor were reopened for the pilgrimage, and as no infectious diseases succeeded in reaching the Hejaz during the whole of the season it must be reckoned that they have once more justified their existence and the trouble taken to maintain the high standard of efficiency displayed thereat.

The only infectious diseases occurred on ships from India, these being two cases of cholera on the steamship "Sarvistan" of the Nemazie Line from Calcutta, three cases of smallpox on the steamship "Shuja" of the Mogul Line, also from

Calcutta, and three cases of cerebro-spinal meningitis on the steamship "Alavi" of the same line from Bombay.

In the first and last instances the precautions taken proved efficacious, but in the second instance although no pilgrims were affected two further members of the crew developed this disease after the ship's departure from Kamaran. This disease should I think be classed with cholera and plague as its ravages in the Hejaz are well known and the disease appears to develop a more virulent form in this country.

The first case of smallpox on the steamship "Shuja" was isolated on board at Kamaran and the ship allowed to proceed. She arrived in Jeddah with the case still on board, and after the pilgrims had been disembarked returned to Aden to discharge cargo. The first case was one of the wireless operators and on the way to Aden two further cases broke out, both having been in direct contact with the first. The second case was the second wireless operator and the third the attendant upon the first. These were all disembarked at Aden.

Fortunately none of the pilgrims were attacked and the disease did not break out in the Hejaz.

The cases of cholera occurred some days after the ship's departure from Calcutta and the last case some four days before arrival at Kamaran and so after the usual formalities and as no suspect cases were found the ship was allowed to proceed.

A certain amount of difficulty was experienced with the Hejaz authorities upon the arrival of the first pilgrim ship from India. The ship had been ten days out from Bombay, and two days prior to her arrival had gone through the usual formalities at Kamaran and was given a clean bill of health from there.

Upon arrival at Jeddah the quarantine authorities placed the ship and passengers in quarantine for twenty-four hours and would not allow any of the passengers to disembark, though some relatives of the kaimakam (Governor) of Jeddah were taken off as soon as the ship dropped anchor.

I suspected that the whole thing had been prearranged and was a deliberate attempt to assert the authority of the Hejaz Administration, so immediately the news reached me I asked the responsible authority why the ship had been placed in quarantine. I was informed that it was because the ship had only been three days out from Kamaran and that it would have to wait till the fourth day before the pilgrims could disembark. This was equivalent to declaring the port of Kamaran infected and was such a lame excuse that I rang up the King and laid the whole matter before him and the ship was released.

Later a provisional agreement was arrived at, whereby ships coming from any recognised quarantine station with a clean bill of health would be allowed to land their pilgrims directly the ship arrived. This was carried out to the letter and now that the Hejaz Government has become a signatory to the International Sanitary Convention, recently drawn up at Paris, it is hoped that there will be no incidents of a similar nature in the future and that the Hejaz Government will be able to devote more time to the sanitary reorganisation of Jeddah and Mecca and its environs, Arafat and Muna.

Taking into consideration the number of pilgrims who passed through Kamaran, surprisingly few complaints were received, and these mostly from elderly men and obese women who found the gymnastics involved in the undressing and bathing requirements too strenuous.

Many highly respectable first-class passengers did complain that they were herded with the lower class pilgrims travelling on deck. This appears to be an exceedingly just complaint and might with advantage be obviated in future by the simple division of the places involved or by the more respectable first- and second-class passengers going through their ablutions before or after the deck passengers.

The fact that their clothes are all bundled together to be placed in the steam disinfectant is also objectionable.

The chief complainants were the Emeer-el-Shariat of Bihar and Orissa, Malvi Sanaullah, president of the Indian Hadith Society, Nawab Habib-el-Rahman Sharwani, and a Minister of Hyderabad, Deccan. Their grievances were as set out above.

On the other hand, many influential pilgrims stated that the authorities at Kamaran were very courteous and kind, and that the opportunity of getting ashore after being confined for some days on board ship was considered rather in the nature of a pleasant break in a monotonous voyage than a direful and necessitous formality forced upon them by a despotic Government.

5. SANITATION, HEALTH AND FOOD SUPPLY.

With the exception of a little street cleaning and the erection of a new water condenser in Jeddah, no sanitary measures whatever were taken by the Hejaz authorities during the pilgrimage.

The reasons for this are many and various, but it is chiefly pleaded in their defence that they had neither sufficient time, money nor experience to cope with the requirements of the situation, which, by the way, is a task of no small proportions.

This excuse is feeble, and the real reasons would appear to lie in the fact that the authorities were so busy planning and scheming for the success of the Moslem Conference at Mecca that they had little or no time to devote to the more urgent requirements for the preservation of the health of the pilgrims and inhabitants of the country.

That such a state of affairs should have existed is deplorable, but that the pilgrimage should have passed off without a serious outbreak of disease is miraculous.

The water supply in Jeddah until the completion of the new condenser, capable of an output of 170 tons per day, was exceedingly precarious, as the old condenser, capable of an output of only 30 tons per day, was in a bad state of repair and actually falling in pieces.

As the new plant was working and completed some days before the influx of pilgrims returning from Mecca, the danger of a scarcity of water was removed, and now good water can be secured at 2 local piastres, about twopence, per kerosene tin.

With the exception of a little sweeping of the main thoroughfares in Jeddah, mentioned above, no measures were adopted to keep the place clean and free from disease. Such things as public latrines are unknown, and the nearest side street or any convenient wall is utilised for this purpose. It is consequently unnecessary for me to enlarge upon this state of affairs.

The houses in which the pilgrims are placed upon arrival are for the most part in an advanced state of dilapidation and verminous. The smells emanating from the drainage, which is an open pipe to each floor leading to a soakage pit under the building, can better be imagined than described.

The food-stuffs in Jeddah throughout were plentiful, and in comparison with other years less expensive. Fruits and vegetables were obtainable in quantities, and there was always a good supply of desert mutton, which, though tough, is not bad. Eggs were scarce and expensive, and the milk supply was simply abominable.

At Bahra, the half distance between Jeddah and Mecca and the resting place after the first stage of the journey to this latter, for which two stages are necessary, water is supplied from local open wells dug in the sandy bottom of the Wadi Fatma, which here is some 12 or more miles wide. The water is filthy, and all around the open well is scattered animal and human excreta. No attempt is made to fence off the wells or to avoid pollution of the waters in any way.

Vegetables and fruits are also obtainable at this small hamlet, but as the pilgrims have been travelling all night on camel back and the shade temperature, of which they can find but little or inadequately provide for by calico cloths, &c., sometimes reaches 120°, they do not evince any great desire for food, preferring to doze until the evening, when they proceed on the last stage of their journey to the Holy City.

In Mecca I am informed that no arrangements whatever were provided for the sanitation of the town, not even to the extent of street cleaning. Public latrines were as at Jeddah and houses, if anything, in a worse condition.

The Indian vice-consul attached to this agency as medical officer reports that he visited many of the houses in which the pilgrims were placed, and for the most part they were filthy in the extreme. Many of the pilgrims were placed in cellars which were but sparsely lighted by small windows or rather small openings just above the road level, and even these were overcrowded.

In all the houses the drainage was as in Jeddah, and the pits underneath the houses provided breeding places for mosquitoes, which were present in large numbers.

The food supply in Mecca was very good and cheaper even than in Jeddah, vegetables and fruits, ghee and meats being plentiful, but all kept in filthy places, and all covered with flies of all sizes, colours and descriptions.

Dust was also very prevalent, such preventative measures, as street sweeping or watering, being unknown, and owing to the lack of latrines, &c., it was particularly germ laden and productive of many throat and eye diseases.

The water supply was good until about three days before the Haj actually, corresponding with the arrival of a great number of Ibn Saud's followers, about 30,000, on the outskirts of Mecca. As these people had come on camels a great quantity of water was needed for their own and their animals' requirements, and they did not hesitate to block the Ain Zabadah water supply to provide this need, and by so doing cut off the supply of water to Mecca.

Fortunately it had been possible to put a certain quantity in the tanks at Arafat and Muna prior to this happening, otherwise the situation would have been more serious. As it was the price of water in Mecca increased considerably, and people were obliged to pay as much as 10*d.* for a kerosene tin full of Mecca well water, which was brackish and exceedingly polluted.

This state of affairs lasted until some eight days after the Haj, when the canal was cleared and most of the Bedouin had departed.

Approximately 100,000 people were present in the restricted areas of Arafat and Muna, where absolute chaos reigned during the days of the Haj, and no attempt whatever was made to dispose of the filth of the camps or the butchered animals which, after a few hours in a burning sun, decomposed very quickly. As each of these 100,000 people had slaughtered a sheep, cow or camel, which was left to lie as it died, it requires but little imagination to produce a mental appreciation of the resultant stench after the first few hours.

The diseases most prevalent were affections of the throat and eyes owing to the filthiness of the dust, malaria, dysentery which is endemic in the Hejaz, and heat prostration and exhaustion. This latter accounted for many deaths, especially amongst the Egyptian pilgrims.

The Hejaz authorities endeavoured, with the limited time and resources at their disposal, to establish a hospital and medical centre, but as both time and resources, and particularly the latter, were sadly restricted the result was that anybody going into hospital seldom came out alive.

They have no medical men of standing or of sufficient practice, they mostly being young Turks and Syrians taken from the Beirut and Constantinople medical colleges and utilised as army doctors before they had completed their instruction. After the armistice they drifted to the Hejaz, still following their profession as army doctors, and here they have remained without any resources or means of completing their studies. They are consequently, for the most part, doctors in name only, with perhaps the exception of the King's own medical adviser, Dr. Mahmuda, recently Hejaz delegate at the Paris Sanitary Conference, and at present director-general of the Hejaz Public Health Department.

A hospital is also maintained at Jeddah, but it has an even less enviable reputation than the institution at Mecca, and local Bedouins, if told they must go to hospital, prefer to crawl out into the desert and hide. And this is no exaggeration.

The quarantine islands instituted in the time of Hussein's reign have been renovated, and a small water distilling plant and an electric generating plant installed. The buildings have all been repaired, and the islands, as soon as a supply of medicines and the services of a suitable staff can be acquired, should serve a useful purpose for passengers coming from infected ports to the Hejaz direct.

The Government now state that a committee under the presidency of the Director of Public Health has been appointed to thoroughly examine the sanitary situation in the Hejaz, and draw up a scheme for its reorganisation, in view of the experiences of the present Haj. They are to prepare a report on the necessary measures to be taken in order to obviate a repetition of this year's chaos, and I have every reason to believe that a more or less determined effort will be made by the Hejaz authorities in the course of the year in this respect.

Other than the above many resolutions were passed by the delegates of the different Moslem societies and nations represented at the recent Mecca Conference regarding the improvements required in the sanitary state of the Holy Places and Jeddah, and this also should provide an incentive to the local authorities to provide better measures next season.

6. PUBLIC ORDER AND SECURITY.

All pilgrims and visitors to the Hejaz since Ibn Saud has assumed control are loud in their praises of the perfect security of the roads to Mecca and the caravan routes from Mecca, Jeddah, Rabigh, and Yambo to Medina.

It is frankly stated that such a state of perfect security has never before existed in this country, and this fact has gone far to temper the many criticisms levelled at

the present Administration. It should, after all, be of small import to the pilgrims to be denied a cigarette in the Holy City and to be made by force to obey the precepts of the religion they profess if they can travel over hill and desert in perfect security and enjoy a privilege that has never previously existed.

The memory of the caravan robbed at Khaif and the hundreds of pilgrims killed and robbed annually on the Haj by the Bedouin robbers during the reigns of Ibn Saud's predecessors throws the performance of clearing up the country of these people into brilliant relief, and he is to be commended upon the success that has attended his efforts in this respect.

It is a strange sight to see two or three, or even single, pilgrims meandering across the desert of an evening swinging a small lantern in their hands and advertising to the whole countryside their whereabouts. Yet this was a nightly performance during the Haj, and not one of these people was robbed or harmed. Instead of large caravans leaving Jeddah with escorts as formerly, parties of two and three leave and arrive as fancy takes them, and all in perfect safety.

Though the control, or rather the security, of the roads and routes is so splendid, there is still a lot of room for improvement in the police forces of Jeddah and Mecca.

The force is generally commanded by a Syrian officer of the late Turkish army or some such mercenary, and the police themselves are mostly Turks, Palestinians or Syrians. The two latter predominate. They have plenty of enthusiasm for their work, but as they are poorly commanded and have no set instructions or training, they are consequently working in the dark, and if perchance they seize initiative by the forelock, it is as often as not productive of a consular incident and much heated discussion ensues.

Thieving and robbery is not at all prevalent in the towns, as the thought of the loss of a hand and the stump being dipped in boiling oil as an antiseptic is not conducive to the development of these practices.

Mecca and Jeddah are alike in this respect, except that in Mecca a number of Wahabis are employed whose special duty is to protect the Kaaba and prevent the pilgrims from indulging in tomb worship and smoking. It was of these that most of the complaints have been received, and there is no doubt that their religious zeal carried them to extremes.

Many pilgrims were arrested for smoking and praying at tombs and other transgressions of the Wahabi code of religion, and were either belaboured on the spot or taken to the police stations, where the payment of a small fine generally meant the withdrawal of the charge.

One Malay was arrested and imprisoned for thieving, but only remained in prison for a week.

The causes of this state of affairs is a complete lack of organisation, and consequently chaos prevails, and whether it be upon the arrival and disembarkation of a pilgrim at Jeddah, and the consequent struggle through the customs, or upon the departure or arrival of a caravan at Mecca or Jeddah, the story is always the same. Much noise and shouting and a complete lack of all control and system. This shortcoming does not, of course, endanger life, and the pilgrim may consider it as a necessary part of the tribulations through which he must pass to obtain eternal salvation by making the Haj. But if only the authorities and the pilgrims alike could realise how greatly everything would be expedited and facilitated if a little organisation were introduced, I am sure that they would lose no time in making the necessary changes.

Though the situation at Mecca and Jeddah in this respect was bad, it was as nothing compared to what existed, or, at least, did not exist, at Arafat and Muna during the four days of the actual Haj. During these days there was an absolute lack of control of any kind, and the resulting confusion and state of chaos existing on the roads and in the villages was indescribable.

Approximately 100,000 persons arriving at Arafat, mostly mounted on unwieldy camels or small donkeys, of whom 30,000 were Bedouin from the desert, and cared neither for life nor limb as they were now assured of paradise, riding everywhere at top speed, colliding with camels laden with the bulky and insecurely fastened shukdufs, and causing panic wherever they went, was a scene of such disorder that many pilgrims will long remember it.

A number of pilgrims and smaller animals were trampled to death in this mass of people and animals, particularly so on the third day of the Haj, when the ceremony of stoning the pillars representing the devil and evil things generally takes place.

Again, the Bedouin did not deign to walk or proceed in an orderly fashion, but

as the place was surrounded with pilgrims, they pushed their way through on camel-back, and report says that seven persons were trampled to death at this place alone. How many received injuries can never be estimated, but many of the returning pilgrims stated that people could be seen in all directions and in all odd corners attending to their bruises and wounds.

When one realises that a dozen or so policemen acting with common instructions could have avoided all this unpleasantness and the fatal consequences to a number of pilgrims, it is apparent that these people are still a long way from possessing even the more elementary principles of an organised civilisation.

However, the Government have again announced the same excuses put forward for their shortcomings in other respects, and plans and projects are now being drawn up to provide one-way traffic under strict control and a division of the various areas into camp sites on military lines.

The erection of latrines and water-supply depots are also envisaged, and if these projects are carried through a better state of affairs should exist in the future.

It is also rumoured that Ibn Saud is obtaining a fetva from the ulema to forbid the Bedouin from entering the Haram on camel-back during the Haj owing to the danger to life and limb.

7. TRANSPORT IN THE HEJAZ.

Transport arrangements for the pilgrims in the Hejaz were most satisfactory, only once did they break down, and that through no particular fault of the local authorities.

From the ship to the shore, pilgrims are conveyed along with their baggage in large sailing boats, locally known as sambouks, but more generally as dhows. These boats are very solidly built and are safe sea-boats. No accidents of a serious nature occurred this season during the transportation of the pilgrims to or from the ships, some of which lay out in the outer harbour some 4 miles from the town itself and which can only be reached through a narrow and intricate passage leading through the coral reefs. The charges for this service as fixed by the Government was approximately 2s. and included the transport of the pilgrim and his baggage and the loading and the unloading of the latter. That the pilgrims are sometimes made to pay more by the sambouk men is well known, but this season as often as possible the pilgrimage officer has gone on board all incoming ships and informed the pilgrims of what they should pay, or he has remained in the custom-house rendering them a similar service and settling disputes which invariably arise as to the rates of exchange of the various currencies.

I would suggest that in order to avoid the delay and discomfort caused to the pilgrims by this state of affairs, the fare paid to the shipping companies at the port of embarkation should cover transport from the shore to the ship and *vice versa*. This could be done by the addition of 2 rupees to the total fare in a similar way to the 70 piastres at present collected over and above the fare by the shipping companies for the Hejaz quarantine dues. The shipping company would then be responsible for the transport of the pilgrim and his baggage from the ship to the shore and the shore to the ship on disembarkation and embarkation at Jeddah respectively.

This would also avoid the necessity of pilgrims opening their purses, which are hidden in various odd corners of their bodies, whilst in a crush of people, either in the dhow or in the custom-house and would obviate the possibility of the pilgrim losing his money and also give him more leisure to attend to his luggage.

The sheikhs of the sambouks have been approached on this question and they state that they would only be too pleased with the arrangement, as it would free them from the exceeding tedious work of collecting the money from the pilgrims. They further state that they would be prepared to allow the shipping companies or their agents to retain 5 per cent. of this money to cover their extra work, but this should hardly be necessary as the agents are aware of the number on board the ship and checking would not be required, but the money simply handed to the sheikhs who would divide it in their own manner.

Transport to Mecca this year for the first time in the history of Islam was by two means, camel and motor cars. The former greatly predominated and was the backbone of the transport system, but now that mechanical transport has made its appearance there is no doubt that it has come to stay.

Some time prior to the Haj, a concession was granted to several Government officials and local merchants for the establishment of a motor service between Jeddah

and Mecca. The concessionaires as soon as the matter was settled came to an arrangement with an Egyptian syndicate and for a monetary consideration and, I believe, a fourth share of the profits handed the exploitation of the service over to them.

As a matter of fact, owing to the bad road between Jeddah and Mecca and the careless and ruthless manner in which the cars were driven by the local chauffeurs, the company lost considerably on the undertaking, but nevertheless a large number of pilgrims benefited by the opportunity and went to Mecca by car. It is true that perhaps a dozen times in the course of the journey they would have to get out and push the car through the soft sand, but even so they generally reached the Holy City in three or four hours instead of taking two days by the slower and more tedious alternative provided by the camels. The fare to Mecca was 24s. per person, though premiums had invariably to be paid, as the demand for seats was always greater than the supply. I understand that the concession has now been withdrawn by the Government and the company is going into liquidation. But another will spring up to take its place.

Ibn Saud states that the motor concession is but a step to a railway between Mecca and Jeddah, but that if it were to be built at once there might be trouble with the Bedouins, who would lose a yearly income of a few pounds from their camels and perhaps create difficulties. By the introduction of cars, the change over is more gradual and inevitable.

Camels were supplied in plenty for the journey to Mecca, and even an extraordinary demand for 700 camels to transport the Mahmal and escort from Jeddah to Mecca did not seem to affect or disorganise in any way the ordinary pilgrim arrangements.

The charges were about equivalent to those charged in the days of Hussein, but the exactions of the camelmen over and above the lawful charges existing then do not exist now.

The charges for a camel and shukduf for the transport of two people was approximately 18s., and included a Government tax of 9s., leaving but 9s. for the camelman. They, however, appeared to be content, or if not they were too frightened to show their discontent, and the transport of the thousands of pilgrims passed off without any hitches whatever.

The transport arrangements between Mecca and Arafat and Muna broke down at the last minute owing to a number of the camelmen becoming alarmed at the possibility of a clash between the escort of the Mahmal and the Wahabis from the desert, who considered the Mahmal and the attendant ceremony connected therewith as idolatrous, and so a number of some thousands left Mecca and retired into the desert with their animals until the danger should pass.

Owing to the shortage created by this action of the camelmen, prices charged for the camel hire for the journey to Arafat reached as much as £4 4s., including the Government tax of 14s., and even at this high price sufficient camels could not be procured for the transport of all the pilgrims, some, but not a great many of whom were obliged to cover the distance on foot. The official Government rate was £2, but the demand was so keen that it would have been quite impossible to have attempted to control the charge.

A number of pilgrims who were fortunate enough to secure camels for the journey to Arafat nevertheless missed the Haj owing to the fact that they happened to be near the Mahmal when the incident with the Bedouin occurred. Hearing a sharp burst of firing, and thinking that a massacre was about to take place, they considered discretion the greatest of their religious virtues and fled back to Mecca, thereby gaining safety but missing the glory of making the Haj.

Transport to and from Medina was by camel only, and there was no shortage in this respect. The roads, as previously stated, were perfectly safe, and no incidents of even a minor character occurred.

The following comparison between the charges in the time of Hussein, when safety on the routes and roads was practically non-existent, and the charges of the present régime are interesting and indicative of the more restrained but similar methods adopted:—

In the early part of Hussein's reign the camel hire to Medina was £6, but which was gradually increased as the season advanced to £8 or £10.

In the latter part of his reign £14 was the official charge, of which he took £7 as Government tax and the camelmen received the remainder.

During the present season the camel hire for the first caravan to Medina was

£3, on the second £4 and on the third £8 was charged, whilst the pilgrims who proceeded to Medina after the Haj had to pay £10 per camel for two persons, of which the camelmen received £4 10s. and the Government took a like amount. The remaining £1 is divided amongst the mutawwif, mukhrij and the mogavim. The two latter are the sheikh of the camelmen and the head of the party of camelmen and receive a fee as such.

The camelmen were completely cowed by the thought of the punishment that would be meted out to them in case of misbehaviour, and as an indication as to how far this was true may be cited the case of the mutawwif who, when the caravan was in the desert midway between Rabigh and Jeddah, demanded that he should be paid 4 rupees per head for his services. The pilgrims protested and threatened to go to the Sultan and complain, whereupon the camelmen themselves gave the mutawwif a thrashing and resumed the journey.

The matter was of course reported to the authorities, and the mutawwif has been dismissed and given one month's imprisonment.

8. HEJAZ CHARGES ON PILGRIMS.

The following are the charges collected by the Government over and above the actual charges for services rendered in respect of which these taxes are payable:—

Government Dues and Taxes.

Tax collected in respect of—		Amount.	
		s.	d.
1. Passport and quarantine fees ...	...	14	0
2. Passport stamp ...	...	9	
3. Government koshan on each camel to Mecca ...	...	10	0
4. Municipal tax on each camel to Mecca ...	...	3	
5. Government koshan on each camel to Medina. From 6s. to ...	...	50	0
6. Government koshan for each camel to Arafat ...	...	7	0
7. Government koshan for camel back to Jeddah ...	...	10	0
8. Municipal tax for each camel to Arafat ...	...	4	
9. Special koshan at Medina per camel ...	...	10	0
10. Health certificate ...	...	7	
11. Charge on each Bengali pilgrim ...	...	10	6
12. Charge on each other Indian pilgrim ...	...	8	0
13. Charge on each Javanese ...	...	20	0
14. Charge on each Malay ...	...	20	0

(These last four under the name of Radwa.)

The following represents the charges of services rendered, which have been fixed by the Government, in addition to which there are the charges for camel hire set out under the heading of transport:—

Service		Amount.	
		s.	d.
1. Sambouk hire, outer harbour ...	...	2	0
2. Sambouk hire, inner harbour ...	...	1	6
3. Sambouk hire, innermost harbour ...	...	1	0
4. Unloading of kit from sambouk ...	...	2	
5. Porterage from sambouk to house ...	...	1	0
6. Naqaib and Haj Committee charges ...	...	9	
7. House rent: first three nights 2½ piastres per night; following nights, 1½ piastres ...	...	2	6
8. Fee of the agent at Jeddah ...	...	3	0
9. House rent at Mecca (season) ...	...	16	0
10. Mutawwif fees at Mecca ...	...	13	6
11. Zamzami (Holy Water) ...	...	2	8
12. Tent for Arafat ...	...	2	8
13. Fee of agent on return journey to Jeddah ...	...	2	0

In respect of the 9d. charged for the passport stamp and the 7s. charged for the health certificate upon leaving Jeddah, and the further charge of 10s. special koshan

charged to all pilgrims visiting Medina, I should point out that these charges represent items which were instituted after the lists of charges to be levied upon pilgrims during this Haj had been published and broadcasted by Ibn Saud, and therefore represent a lack of good faith on his part. As soon as I heard that the fee of 7s. was being charged for a health certificate I telegraphed to the Sultan protesting, as this was not included in the published lists. No reply was sent to my telegram until ten days afterwards, when most of the pilgrims had departed, and I was then informed that it had been misplaced in the rush of work, and that as the fee had been charged for many years past, and most of the pilgrims had already paid it, it was now too late to stop it.

The lists here given compare very favourably with the charges under the old régime, and the present authorities have at least secured safety on the roads and absolute freedom of the pilgrim from attacks and robberies, though the more persuasive and less forceful methods adopted by the mutawwifs continue unabated. As, however, many of them have been brought to justice and severely punished by the local Government upon complaints from this agency, and as also I am refusing visas to mutawwifs or their agents who wish to proceed to British territories to collect prospective victims for the next Haj, it is hoped to limit the scope of their activities and thus lessen the abuses to which the pilgrims are subjected.

9. RELIGIOUS RESTRICTIONS.

Owing to the propaganda conducted by Ibn Saud and his Wahabi elements, and the counter-propaganda conducted by his enemies the Shereefs and others, there was at first grave doubts as to whether there would be a large or even a normal pilgrimage this year.

The fears in this respect were considerably augmented by the destruction of a number of tombs held sacred by many of the sects of Islam, but as idolatrous by the Wahabis, and the abolition of smoking and the consumption of alcoholic liquors in the Hejaz. The incident at Taif to which much publicity was given and which gave the Moslems in general an idea that the Wahabis were a wild lot of desert Bedouin was a further factor.

Since the Wahabis have gained control of the Holy Mosque in Mecca they have placed certain religious restrictions upon the citizens and forced them to conform outwardly at least with the tenets of the Wahabi faith.

There can be little doubt that the majority of pilgrims who made the Haj this year regarded their action in the light of an adventure as well as a religious precept, and they were not disappointed in the former.

The main restrictions from a religious point of view were undoubtedly the destruction of the tombs and the pilgrims being prevented from praying thereat for the intercession of the dead person on their behalf with Allah.

It is a mistake to say that the tombs have been destroyed, as the graves actually remain intact, but the cupolas or domes by which they were surmounted have been taken off and the pilgrims informed that they may only say at the graves of any of the Prophet's family or relations such prayers as are set out in the Koran. As this is restricted to several short sentences, and as they were not allowed to circumambulate the tombs or kiss them or rub themselves against them, the more orthodox Moslems took the matter very much to heart, and great was the outcry at this restriction, more particularly from the Persians, who appear to be inveterate tomb worshippers, and the Indians, who were also inclined in this direction, despite the fact that the Hanafi belief forbids the erection of buildings over tombs, and the Prophet before his death requested that his tomb should not be treated as the tombs of the Jews and Christians, *i.e.*, be made into a large covered structure.

The Imam Shaffi sect, to which all the Malay and Java Moslems belong, do not venerate shrines and were indifferent for the most part to their abolition or otherwise, but they would, it is considered, be annoyed all the same if the Prophet's tomb was touched. As Ibn Saud has, since the Haj, published a statement that he intends to preserve the tomb of the Prophet with his property, his soul, and his sons, if necessary, it looks as if for the moment it is safe from demolition, but whether his fanatical followers, wherein lies his strength, will later force him to do so, cannot for the moment be foreseen.

The tombs of which the domes and cupolas have been destroyed to date include that of Syedna Hamza and those of the Prophet's family at Medina, and the tomb of Khadijah, the Prophet's wife, in Mecca, and many others.

The house in which the Prophet was supposed to have been born has been destroyed, as has also the house in which Syedna Omar the Great was supposed to have been converted to Islam.

Guards were placed on the cemeteries and over all the holy shrines, and any pilgrims disobeying the Wahabi orders were beaten by these guards and called mushriks and kaffirs (idolaters and infidels).

After a certain amount of discussion I am pleased to be able to state that the pilgrimage officer obtained permission for the cemeteries to be opened in the mornings and afternoons for a few hours after they had been closed by the authorities on account of the number of pilgrims that were disobeying the Wahabi orders, and the entry of pilgrims was again allowed under the restrictions that had previously existed. Thus, the pilgrims had an opportunity of at least seeing the tombs and saying the few prayers allowed by the Wahabi creed, even if they were obliged to think the rest that they desired to say. Though guards were placed to allow no departure from the Wahabi ritual, an occasional lucky pilgrim would get in a surreptitious kiss or rub, and so satisfy his conscience and become the envy of his fellows.

A further grievance was that the prayers in the Holy Mosque were conducted by Wahabi imams and during the month of Ramadan only one imam, a Wahabi, was allowed to lead the Trawiah prayers. Upon learning this many of the pilgrims remained away from the mosque, but the mutawwifs were then ordered to bring them along.

A third grievance was the abolition of the Mould-el-Nabi reading, which is greatly respected by the Sunni sect and attended by them with great regularity. Fourthly, the placing of special pulpits for the Wahabi ulemas to preach from was greatly resented, and upon this happening many of the ulemas of the other sects of Islam took an active part in denouncing the Wahabi tenets. Reciprocal recriminations followed, and it was only by good fortune and the placing of extra police in the Kaaba that rioting did not become the natural sequence of these wordy combats. Prominent amongst these debaters were Sanaullah, the president of the Indian Hadith Society, and Sheikh Rashid Ridha of Egypt, who attacked the orthodox sects with great vehemence.

Fifthly, the Moslems of the Sunni sect were prevented from calling upon the Prophet as if he were still alive. The Sunni repeat "Ya Rasoul Allah" (Oh! Prophet of God), and this by the Wahabis is supposed to be a useless and senseless proceeding as the Prophet is dead, and one should not call upon his ashes.

Sixthly, on the occasion of the arrival of the King's father and family from Riyadh the mutaf around the Kaaba was cleared of pilgrims, who were performing the tawaf (circumambulating the Kaaba seven times), in order that the King's father and on another occasion his family could perform this religious duty in comfort. This is the first time in the history of Islam that an action of this kind has been recorded, and it caused great ill-feeling.

Seventhly, the restrictions against smoking were strictly enforced, and many pilgrims of all sects and nationalities were fined or beaten for this offence. With Moslems, as with most other people of this world, it would appear to be the little things that count for most, and much more was heard of this restriction from the common run of pilgrims than of all the others set out above.

It would serve no useful purpose if I were to enter into the details of all the petty tyrannies adopted by the Wahabis or go into the numbers who were fined or beaten or received other forms of punishment, but I must add that a great number of the persons who were administering the laws themselves indulged in the habits for which they were punishing others, and consequently this invisible bond often tempered the application of the lash or the amount of the fine, and after all, there was no objection to smoking in private if only one refrained from doing so in the streets.

The attitude of the Wahabis in forcing the pilgrims to go to the mosque against their will was another form of tyranny greatly resented, and sometimes people who had no right to be there were forced into the Kaaba before they had time to make any explanation and consequently spent the interval between their entry and exit in fear and trepidation at the thought of displeasing their conscience and teachings in order to please the Wahabis.

Only one case in which British subjects were severely treated came to my notice, and that when a number of Indians went to a place called Shuda, about 2 miles outside Mecca, and were caught smoking by some of the Wahabi irregulars. These

were so severely beaten that they had to be admitted to the local hospital, and were not sufficiently recovered to leave for some days.

Cases of mob rule and of rough handling were of course prevalent, but these occur every year and cannot be placed on the debit side of the Wahabi account. When thousands of pilgrims all anxious to kiss the Black Stone are fighting and struggling to do so it is only natural that some of them should be hurt. The same applies when they wish to enter the Kaaba properly speaking, and when on old Pathan collapsed and died from his exertions the enemies of Ibn Saud made much propaganda out of the fact by saying that the man had been killed by the wild Wahabis in the Kaaba itself.

This year a charge of 3 to 5 rupees was made to all pilgrims entering the Kaaba, and not so long ago the keeper of the key of the Kaaba, who was in Taif at the time of that incident, was severely beaten by the Wahabis for having dared to charge for the performance of this religious duty, and in those days the charge was less than at present.

10. INDIAN PILGRIMAGE.

The number of pilgrims from India this year was approximately 24,331, divided as follows:—

From Bombay (Indians)	...	...	12,348
From Bombay (foreign)	...	...	2,128
From Karachi (Indians)	...	...	6,279
From Karachi (foreign)	...	...	2,692
From Calcutta (Indians)	...	...	884
Total	...	...	24,331

These were carried in ships of the following lines of steamers. The first ship arrived on the 9th February last and the last arrived on the 11th June:—

Mogul Line	...	...	12,065
Nemazie Line	...	...	5,591
Shushtary Line	...	...	6,467
Total adults	...	...	24,123

Of the above number approximately 13,535 came with return tickets, 8,089 made deposits with the Government to the value of the return fare, and 2,499 came with single tickets, having made declarations not to return to India within three years. All these declarations were made at Karachi, 1,300 being Indians and the remainder foreigners, principally Afghans and Bokharis.

The death rate has not yet been ascertained, as the Government do not furnish the necessary returns for some months after the Haj, but it will be forwarded direct to India as soon as it is received.

In view of the low death rate amongst the British Malay pilgrims, it is but reasonable to suppose that the rate was correspondingly low amongst the Indian pilgrims, and from the observations made by the staff of the agency it is hoped that it will not exceed 5 per cent., and even this figure is not entirely due to the lack of sanitation in the Hejaz or to the prevalence of disease in this country, but greatly attributable to the advanced age of many of the pilgrims anxious to make the Haj before they die, who become exhausted by the long sea voyage under trying circumstances and the trek on camel back to Mecca. It is also attributable to a certain extent to what might be called "the will to die." Many of these elderly persons, once they have made the Haj and become sure of the delights of the next world, simply die in the streets of Jeddah and Mecca of inanition. Having completed the Haj, the force of fanaticism which had so long sustained them peters out, and the desire to go on living deserts them. They die in consequence, and are glad of the release.

I have personally seen many such squatting or lying in the full glare of the tropical sun making no effort to buy, beg, borrow or steal the wherewithal to sustain their strength, but just waiting to die in the Holy Land.

The number of destitutes who will have to be repatriated at Government expense this year is, if anything, below the normal, chiefly owing to the action of the Shushtary Line, who at the end of the season, and in order to fill their ship, reduced

the fare to India from 70 rupees to 30 rupees, and later even accepted a number at 20 rupees per head.

The thanks of the Indian Government are due to this company for granting these facilities to the Indian pilgrims, as no other line has done so in the past, nor would they have done so this year. By this action on the part of the agents of the Shushtary Company some 400 pilgrims were enabled to leave Jeddah, and but 300 more or less, completely destitute, remain awaiting repatriation at Government expense.

All these with few exceptions are persons who took the opportunity of proceeding to the Hejaz without sufficient funds for the purpose, having made declarations not to return.

I cannot press too strongly for the abolition of this deplorable system, which is so greatly abused. No pilgrim ought to be allowed to leave India until he has made a deposit to the value of his return fare with the Government. Return tickets are lost or stolen, and there are a number amongst the destitutes who state that they had their tickets stolen. Enquiry reveals that a number of these tickets have already been utilised by somebody for the return journey, and there are consequently no means of assisting these persons except at Government expense.

The actual number of tickets reported as being lost is about 400, and the number of deposit-paid passports about fifty, which is a further argument in favour of combining ticket and passport, as has previously been suggested and rendered possible by the deposit system as opposed to the others.

Until proper passports are issued with photographs and the systems of declarations and return tickets abolished, there can be no remedy for these evils. Compulsory deposits and sensible passports alone solve the greater part of the difficulties encountered.

The transport arrangements from and to India were good with the exception of the Nemazie Line, who still display their tendency to sharp practices which has always been characteristic of this line, and who should be prevented from carrying pilgrims in the future in view of the many complaints that have been made against them in the past and reiterated in the various parts of this report.

Under the heading of "Transport," I have set out some of the greater evils in existence at present, and it would be but useless repetition to give them again here, but one further instance I would give where in the case of the pilgrims who came from Calcutta the shipping companies did not stand by their contracts.

The pilgrims sailing from Calcutta were issued with return tickets and travelled in the steamship "Shuja" and the steamship "Sarvistan," but after the Haj the local agents of the lines refused to send a ship to that port and the pilgrims remained in Jeddah for some weeks, until at last they were forced to travel via Bombay and accept a refund of 30 rupees to cover the rail journey to Calcutta or their respective homes.

That the shipping companies should be able to issue tickets under certain conditions and then disregard these conditions and dictate others more favourable to themselves to the pilgrims they carry is a matter that would appear to require the attention of the authorities concerned.

I would recommend that the fresh water supply in the ships should be open continually and not rationed as at present. I would also recommend that more stringent instructions should be issued as regards keeping the ship clean during the voyage. It should be possible to make the doctors on board responsible under the masters of the ships for the cleanliness of the pilgrims' quarters and to fine them heavily or take away their diplomas if they fail in this respect.

The feeding of the pilgrims by the shipping companies, though at present perhaps impracticable, should be the aim of the near future, and in this manner a great deal of the present filthiness of the pilgrims' quarters will be obviated.

Under the heading of "Shipping," I have also set out a number of the abuses practised by the agents of the shipping companies, and here reiterate the urgent need of having responsible British agents appointed for these lines in Jeddah.

An innovation was made this year which considerably helped the pilgrims upon their arrival. Munshi Ihsanullah, the permanent pilgrimage officer attached to the Agency, met practically every ship upon arrival in the harbour and directed them as to how they should act and the amounts they should pay for the services rendered to them. After this was done, he then proceeded to the custom-houses and the quarantine quay, which are adjacent, and there again gave invaluable help to the pilgrims, not by direct assistance only, but also by keeping an eye on the various

officials, and either remonstrating with them for the evils they practised upon fellow-Moslems or reporting the more serious charges to myself, whereupon I would have the complaint set before the local kaimakam, or, if that did not produce the desired result, telephone to the King, personally requesting him to have the necessary reforms instituted.

As the pilgrims travel ashore in the same sambouks as their baggage, it would appear to be a simple matter to keep trace of it, but, unfortunately, upon arrival at the quays in Jeddah the pilgrims are disembarked at the quarantine and their luggage is taken to the customs and bundled ashore by the dhowmen, who are anxious to earn the few piastres reward for their labours and get back to the ship for a further load.

This is naturally productive of a certain amount of chaos and loss of baggage, but with the effective aid rendered by the pilgrimage officer little was lost and much of it afterwards recovered.

The customs authorities made no charge for food-stuffs this year unless it was obvious that the pilgrim had brought an excess and intended to sell some of it in the country.

About 1,000 Indian pilgrims took the opportunity of alternately riding in and pushing the cars of the motor concession, but even with the discomforts of the journey they, with few exceptions, arrived at their destinations in from four to five hours, and some in considerably less time, depending upon the skill of the chauffeurs.

The great majority, as is usual, proceeded to Mecca on camels. The richer pilgrims with camel and shukduf, the poorer with perhaps one camel between four, taking it in turns to walk and ride, whilst a certain number without sufficient funds to pay for camel hire actually walked the whole distance.

To Medina, on account of the distance involved, camels are a necessity, and some 13,676 took the opportunity of visiting the Prophet's Tomb. Of these, 7,223 went to Medina before the Haj and 6,453 afterwards. The charges for camel hire are set out under the heading of "Transport," and it will be seen that it was a case of the early pilgrim securing the cheaper transport.

On the return from Mecca and Medina after the Haj the pilgrims were embarked with commendable despatch, and, as the living conditions in Mecca were better and the place more commodious than at Jeddah, I was, with the assistance of the pilgrimage officer, enabled to make arrangements with the local authorities to let only such a number leave Mecca each day as could be handled and embarked at Jeddah. This was done by them with a fair amount of success, and, although Jeddah was overcrowded for the first few days after the first caravans had arrived and premiums for preferential booking were solicited everywhere, a better state of affairs prevailed later, for which the authorities are to be thanked.

This season, thanks to the security of the roads, only one case of a caravan being held up occurred, and this was not due to wild Bedouin robbers, but to a rapacious mutawwif, who demanded 4 rupees from each pilgrim for his services to them in addition to the fee that he was already being paid. The ensuing argument was settled by the pilgrims with the aid of the camelmen, who were themselves afraid of the consequences should the news of this occurrence come to the ears of the King. The mutawwif is now languishing in prison and has been dismissed from his post as a mutawwif.

Under the heading of religious restrictions I have already set out the principal restrictions placed upon the pilgrims by the Wahabis.

Many of the persons who were loudest in their condemnation of the actions of the local authorities were Indians, a number of whom were persons of authority in the Indian Moslem world, and who had been attracted to Mecca by the World's Moslem Conference held during the pilgrim season.

The most prominent amongst these were the Ali brothers, Mohammed and Shaukat, and Suleiman Nadvi of the Indian Khilafists, Kefiatullah, president of the Indian Ulema Society and Sanaullah, of the Hadith Society of India, who are Wahabis by persuasion.

There were, besides these, many others holding important posts under the Government in India, and who had an opportunity of seeing for themselves, without being unduly blinded by their political prejudices, the actual state of affairs in the Hejaz. From such of these with whom I had the opportunity of conversing I gathered that they considered the most urgent and necessary reform in the Hejaz to be that of sanitation, with which, after passing one pilgrim season in Jeddah, I cordially agreed.

They were loud in their praises of the security of the highways, but deplored the lack of order and control at Arafat and Muna, and, of course, the destruction of the Holy Shrines touched them deeply, though admitting that it was correct perhaps according to the Koran.

The rumour that the dome of the Prophet's Tomb was to be demolished caused consternation, but, in view of the recent declaration by Ibn Saud, relief will now be felt for its safety.

A number of Indians were arrested and beaten by the police authorities in Mecca for contraventions of the local laws, more in regard to smoking and the veneration of tombs than for misdemeanours or criminal actions.

One Indian was sent from Mecca to Jeddah for deportation on account of his thieving proclivities. This man came as a stowaway from Bombay and is destitute, and as the local authorities refuse to pay for his passage to India, I propose to treat him as an ordinary destitute and repatriate him at Government expense.

Considering the number of pilgrims passing through the Kamaran quarantine station this season, surprisingly few complaints were received, and these chiefly from first and second-class passengers, who objected to being huddled into the dressing rooms of the quarantine station with the less fortunate third-class passengers, and having their clothes mixed with the others for disinfecting purposes.

This would appear to be a fair complaint, and a Member of the Legislative Assembly would, and did, most naturally object to this state of affairs. It should be an easy matter for the authorities to provide screens, or, better still, allow the first and second-class passengers to perform their ablutions either before or after the more lowly third-class passengers.

Sanaullah, the president of the Indian Hadith Society, was most bitter in his objections to the procedure at Kamaran, and stated that he intended to leave no stone unturned to have the quarantine station abolished.

The Indian vice-consul and medical officer attached to this agency seems to have done some useful work at Mecca, where he attended many pilgrims, either at the house rented for the purpose or in the pilgrims' quarters. At Arafat many cases were also treated for minor ailments.

The doctor complains, however, that the house with which he is supplied is too small and situated in an out-of-the-way street, some distance from the Kaaba, and is consequently difficult of access by the pilgrims, and requests that a greater sum should be allowed for the rental of a more suitable building in one of the few main thoroughfares near the Kaaba, where all the pilgrims congregate and would be able to see the place.

He complains also that the mutawwifs of the Indians were instructed to have all the sick sent to hospital.

This is a very natural and humane order for the Government to issue were the hospitals capable of treating the sick, but it would, I think, be more in the interests of the pilgrims were they taken to their own pilgrimage doctor, even though he has no hospital at his disposal.

Should the Government of India be prepared to authorise the rental of a more suitable house for the doctor's needs and the employment of one or two assistants, which could nearly always be found amongst the pilgrims themselves, there would, I am sure, be a great increase in the usefulness of having a pilgrim doctor at Mecca during the Haj, and the pilgrims would benefit proportionately.

I would suggest also that the medical officer be forbidden to accept any private practice during the Haj, as such is liable to take up a certain amount of his time and for which the Indian Government pays him to look after the pilgrims and devote his attentions to them.

In order to centralise as much as possible the officers appointed by the Government of India to assist the pilgrims on the Haj, it would be of advantage if the permanent pilgrim officer was also allowed to take up his quarters in the same house as the doctor.

It would perhaps be to the advantage of the Government and the pilgrims alike, if a large house near the Kaaba could be bought for this purpose and so become a landmark well known to all the mutawwifs and easily found by the pilgrims requiring either medical attention or the help of the pilgrimage officer.

This year very few of the pilgrims took the opportunity of making deposits with this agency during their absence at Mecca or Medina, the number so doing being only twenty-one and the amount deposited 2,863 rupees and £150.

In view of the detailed nature of this pilgrimage report, and the fact that

the Indian pilgrimage officer is now attached permanently to the staff of the agency, I have not considered it necessary that he should submit a separate report, as this would merely entail duplication of work. The facts embodied herein, have for the most part been collected and collated by him.

11. MALAY PILGRIMAGE.

Owing to the fact that it is not yet compulsory for British Malay pilgrims to register with the Malay pilgrimage officer attached to this agency during the Haj season, and to the number of Dutch Malays that sail from Singapore and Penang as being the quicker and cheaper route, it has not been possible to calculate exactly how many pilgrims came from British Malaya, but of the 9,608 pilgrims sailing from the ports above mentioned, approximately 5,500 were British and the remainder Dutch Malays.

Of the 5,500 British Malays, 3,073 travelled on the new form of pass of which 2,095 were issued as follows:—

From.	Passes.	Persons.
Straits Settlements—		
Singapore	239	288
Penang	90	124
Malacca	93	125
Federated Malay States—		
Perak	754	1,167
Selangor	382	602
Negri Sembilan	85	126
Pahang	81	120
Protected Malay States—		
Johore	134	173
Kedah	143	202
Perlis	4	4
Kelantan	90	142
Tringannu	0	0
Total	2,095	3,073

As I understand that it will become compulsory for all pilgrims sailing from British Malaya to take out this new form of pass in future and register with the pilgrimage officer upon arrival at Jeddah little comment is needed in that respect. But it has proved itself over and over again to be of inestimable value as a means of keeping trace of the pilgrims and assisting them if and when necessary.

Persons who come on the pilgrimage with the intention of remaining in Mecca or the Hejaz, or of proceeding to Egypt or Palestine for purposes of study after they have completed the Haj should be furnished with the ordinary passport and not a pilgrim pass for Mecca, as thereby they avoid the risk of losing the value of the return half of their ticket, and also avoid difficulties with the various passport authorities, who at times refuse them visas for their destination as the passes are for Mecca only.

In all 194 of the Malay pilgrims announced their intention of remaining in the Hejaz over the next Haj and many of them will probably stay longer.

This means that the value of the return half of their ticket will of a necessity have to be recovered from the agents or they must forfeit same. As they probably took the return ticket in ignorance of the real facts of the case it would appear to be unfair to have this money confiscated.

The following are the numbers of deaths amongst the pilgrims:—

State.	Number.
Straits Settlements—	
Singapore	10
Penang	8
Malacca	15
Federated Malay States—	
Perak	75
Selangor	15
Negri Sembilan	11
Pahang	10
Protected Malay States—	
Johore	6
Kedah	7
Perlis	0
Kelantan	5
Tringannu	0
Total	162

or 5.29 per cent., which is very low in comparison with previous years, and particularly so in regard to 1924, when the percentage of deaths was 17 per cent.

In view of the low death rate amongst the pilgrims registered at this agency it appears reasonable to suppose that the death rate amongst the unregistered pilgrims was little if any higher, and the result of the pilgrimage in that respect must be considered very satisfactory.

The effects of the deceased pilgrims were with few exceptions handed over to relatives or friends of the deceased for transmission to the next-of-kin, and the counterfoils of their passports were endorsed to this effect, and receipts for the effects attached to each counterfoil, so that it should be an easy matter to settle any dispute which may arise in respect of the delivery of the deceased's effects to the rightful next-of-kin.

In view of the fact that a number of the pilgrim brokers in British Malaya were inducing the pilgrims to name them as the next-of-kin on the pilgrim passes, until the attention of the authorities was drawn to this irregularity by this agency, certain difficulties may arise in future as to the rightful recipient of a deceased's effects. The Islamic law "Sharia" is clear on the point, and even where a rightful next-of-kin has been nominated it should be borne in mind that he is not to be the sole recipient of the deceased's effects, but is rather authorised to receive and distribute them according to the religious law to all the beneficiaries by the decease of the pilgrim relative.

The greater number of pilgrims from British Malaya travelled on steamers of the Blue Funnel Line, and only two steamers of the Nemazie Company were so employed.

A number, approximately 200, also travelled to India, and sailed for Jeddah from Bombay, as they had been told or imagined that it was a cheaper route.

They, however, were disillusioned in due course, and all of them later applied to return to Singapore direct. A number of these who had made deposits in India were refunded the value of the deposit, and were thus enabled to sail for their homes direct. The greater number of them, however, are remaining in the Hejaz over next season.

No complaints were received by me as to insufficiency of water or fuel on the steamers of the Blue Funnel Line, and all the pilgrims seemed contented with their lot. Only once had I to interfere between the pilgrims and the local Dutch agents of the company, and that when some twenty-four bags of rice to the value of £14 were lost overboard owing to the parting of a defective winch rope.

The agents at first refused to accept responsibility, but after I threatened to refer the matter to their principals direct they decided to refer the matter to their management, and eventually a refund of this amount was made to the owners of the rice.

The Nemazie Line, on the other hand, avoided by all means in its power to accept the responsibilities assumed by it in the transport of pilgrims. Two steamers of this line, the steamship "Armenistan" and the steamship "Gorgistan" sailed from British Malaya carrying 313 and 572 pilgrims respectively, and upon the

completion of the pilgrimage they were both used to transport Indians to Bombay and Karachi, and the 800 odd Malay pilgrims were forced to remain in Jeddah until forty-two days after the Haj, despite the fact that the steamship "Gorgistan" was lying idle in the harbour for some fifteen days awaiting the returning Indian pilgrims from Medina.

After being threatened to some extent by this agency the company, through their agents, at last agreed to feed the destitute of this number, who had, owing to the long wait in Jeddah, spent all their money. Eventually, after the company through the agents again had endeavoured to induce the pilgrims concerned to travel home via Bombay, the steamship "Sarvistan" left with these pilgrims.

I see from my predecessor's reports that this company have always been culpable of neglect and most apparent dishonesty *vis-à-vis* the pilgrims, and I would strongly suggest that they be debarred from carrying pilgrims in future, as their actions only tend to bring ignominy upon the pilgrims and charges of indifference against the authorities of the countries from which they sail.

I would strongly recommend that if this company is still allowed to carry pilgrims, then they be forced to have British agents in Jeddah, as they may hesitate to ask a Britisher to do the dirty work that they have no hesitation in asking a local Arab to do.

The ships of this line are always dirty and a menace to the health of the pilgrims travelling in them, and the only cases of cholera that occurred this season were on board the steamers of this line.

The question of feeding the pilgrims on board the ships and preventing them from bringing and cooking their own food on boards is worthy of consideration, though perhaps there are objections thereto. I am informed by my Dutch colleague that the reason why so many Dutch pilgrims sail from British Malay ports is mostly due to the fact that they have the privilege of taking and cooking their own food on the ships, whereas, if they sail from Dutch ports they are forced to abide by the Dutch regulations which prevent them from bringing food on board the ships, and they are fed by them. At an extra charge, of course. No doubt a number of them prefer to sail from British ports, as they are much closer to their homes, but my Dutch colleague was insistent that the main reason is due to the food question.

There can be no doubt that the cleanliness of the ship would be greatly improved if the pilgrims were fed by the ship, thereby avoiding the necessity of having all sorts and conditions of food-stuffs and cooking utensils in various and doubtful stages of cleanliness lying about the pilgrims quarters.

But against this, most Moslems are careful about the manner in which meat is killed, and to be served up with frozen meat killed in a scientific and clean manner instead of having its throat cut by a protracted sawing motion with a blunt knife would probably induce a riot. The only alternative would appear to be to carry live-stock on board the ships, in which case the remedy might be worse than the disease it is sought to cure.

Several instances of the pilgrims' luggage being pilfered by the sailors of the ships whilst the pilgrims were ashore undergoing the necessary ablutions connected with the quarantine procedure at Kamaran were reported.

In one case, the master caught the thieves redhanded and meted out suitable punishment. The complaints were all of a frivolous nature and the articles stolen of no great value, but there seems to be no reason why guards composed of the junior officers or senior members of the crew should not be placed on sentry duty over the pilgrims' quarters during their absence from the ship.

The attitude of the Malay pilgrims towards the new administration in the Hejaz was one of passive resistance against some of the measures and indifference towards others. For instance, the greatest irritation was caused by the regulation against smoking in the Holy City and by the fact that the Friday prayers in the Mosque were conducted by Wahabi ulemas. The destruction of the buildings over the tombs did not worry them at all, as the Imam Shafi, to which sect all Malay Moslems belong, had himself ordered that tombs should not be surmounted by domes. They would, nevertheless, be perturbed should the Wahabis touch the dome of the Prophets tomb, but in view of Ibn Saud's latest declaration of the inviolability of this sanctuary there appears to be small likelihood that it will ever be touched, though perhaps allowed to disintegrate as they, the Wahabis, would not authorise its repair in their present frame of mind.

A party of about 100 British Malays missed making the Haj this year, not owing to the shortage of camels or any action for which the local authorities can be

blamed, but entirely owing to their discretion, as, when they heard the firing created by the Mahmal incident, they took to their heels and returned to Mecca.

No Malay pilgrim, as far as I have been able to ascertain, met with a violent death, and only one elderly woman disappeared. How and when she left the party is a mystery, and all efforts by the local Government to trace her have proved futile, though the mutawwif responsible for her safety was severely beaten and put into prison.

As she was a woman of about 40 years of age and already rather decrepit, it is improbable that she could have been stolen into slavery, and it is more than probable that she missed the party somewhere, in the desert perhaps, and died there.

The usual mutawwif methods were adopted to fleece the pilgrims, but in each case when reports were made to this agency they were passed on and the miscreants severely dealt with by the Hejaz authorities, who, throughout, did their best to prevent the abuses so prevalent in the past seasons.

The fact of no violent deaths and instances of robbery on the high roads is evidence of the state of security existing in the Hejaz, and many of the Malay pilgrims, generally considered easy prey, were loud in their praises of this state of affairs.

The question of the establishment of a Malay vice-consul at Mecca to conduct the affairs of the pilgrims, I am not prepared to recommend, as I have already noticed a disposition on the part of the Malay pilgrimage officer to avoid as much as possible co-operation with the agency staff. This is regrettable and should be avoided as much as possible. Another reason is that it would give the local authorities an opportunity of playing off the one against the other, besides leading to a certain amount of duplication of work and consequent disorganisation. Another reason is that it would be highly inadvisable to have the representatives of the various British communities worrying the local authorities instead of a central authority, as at present vested in the British agent.

For successful work in the Hejaz close co-operation between the pilgrimage officers and this agency seem to me to be imperative.

12. SUDAN PILGRIMAGE.

The number of pilgrims arriving in Jeddah by steamer during the present season was 2,097, of which 1,377 were Sudanese or West Africans, Nigerians, &c., and a few from French Equatorial Africa.

This number compares unfavourably with the number in 1924, when 3,926 crossed over.

Neither of these figures represents by far the number of Sudanese or West Africans who made the pilgrimage in these years, as many of them proceed to ports on the coast of Eritrea and cross over by dhow to small ports on the Hejaz coast and so to Mecca on foot, thereby avoiding the payment of the Suakim quarantine fees and securing a cheaper passage in a more thoroughly uncomfortable manner.

The majority of these pilgrims are practically destitute, and the action at present being taken by the Sudan authorities to oblige all these pilgrims to cross over by steamer is worthy of commendation.

The great difficulty in all these cases is the provision of passports and to oblige the prospective Haji to make a deposit to the value of his return fare with the Government.

The issue of a pilgrim pass should be evidence of such a deposit, and would be accepted by the shipping company as such, and the risk of the pilgrims lying in Jeddah awaiting repatriation at Government expense would be obviated, and the pilgrim would be forced to return by the way he came in order not to forfeit the deposit with the authorities.

The Sudanese pilgrims are subjected to the same form of abuses as the other pilgrims, but they are generally much poorer and considered as carrion to be hunted only when richer game gives out. The Malayan pilgrims and the same classes of the Indians are included in this last category.

Nevertheless, their passports would be worth stealing to secure a cheap passage to Suakim, and in order to avoid this photographs on the passports are absolutely necessary.

Many of the Takrunis used previously to be stolen into slavery, but so far not a single complaint has reached me of anybody being so treated. This is almost entirely owing to the state of perfect safety existing in the Hejaz.

As usual, each year a number of these people apply to this agency for repatriation, and thanks to the Nigerian Repatriation Fund and a small fund supplied by the Government of the Sudan, it is possible to assist these simple people back to Suakim, from whence they radiate to their various homes.

I would suggest the closest co-operation between the Nigerian and Sudan authorities to ensure the smooth working of the proposed new regulations in the Sudan, and it should be possible to instil into the heads of prospective pilgrims the necessity of proceeding via Suakim.

Owing to the facts above mentioned, it is not possible to trace these people except in rare cases, as they never use a mutawwif, or at least I should say that a mutawwif never interests himself in them, and also the many and various ways in which they reach the Hejaz is not conducive to a control on their numbers.

The death rate amongst them must be high, as they live in the most indescribable filth and squalor in Mecca and Jeddah, but no figures are available at all.

13. EGYPTIAN PILGRIMAGE.

During the present season 16,750 pilgrims arrived in Jeddah from Egypt. Of these 16,094 were Egyptians, the remaining 656 being Palestinians, Syrians, Turks and a few French North Africans.

This probably represents the largest pilgrimage that has taken place from Egypt for many years, and the reason is to be found chiefly in the fact that no pilgrimage was allowed from Egypt during 1925 owing to the state of hostilities existing in the Hejaz and also to the fact that the Mahmal was allowed to come on the Haj with its escort. Other factors were undoubtedly the successful propaganda conducted by the Wahabis and the publicity given to the discussion which took place over the conditions upon which the Mahmal would be allowed to enter the Hejaz.

The Egyptian Government first decided that the pilgrimage for 1926 should be an official pilgrimage, and called tenders for the transport of the Egyptian pilgrims to the Hejaz. The tender of the Khedivial Mail Line being the lowest was accepted, but owing to the limitations set upon the Mahmal by Ibn Saud the Government afterwards declared the official pilgrimage off, and so other shipping companies were free to transport pilgrims provided they complied with the Egyptian Pilgrim Regulations.

The Khedivial Mail Line, however, working in conjunction with the Mogul Line of India, carried all but approximately 2,000, which were divided between Greek, Egyptian and Italian steamers.

The Mahmal and escort was brought to Jeddah in the steamship "Abassieh" and arrived on the morning of the 11th June, nine days before the Haj date proper.

The Egyptian pilgrims during their stay in the Hejaz suffered terribly from the heat, and many of them died of heat and sun-stroke.

Despite the incident of the Mahmal and its almost immediate return to Suez after the Haj instead of proceeding to Medina, as was at first intended, approximately 9,100 of the pilgrims went to Medina from Mecca and afterwards embarked for Suez at Yanbo, a port some five marches from Medina. The remainder sailed from Jeddah direct to Egypt without proceeding to Medina.

The quarantine station at Tor was opened, and all pilgrims were obliged to pass the reglementary three days and go through the usual procedure at that station. No cases of pestilential diseases were discovered, though one person was suspected of having plague, but the bacteriological examination proving negative, the pilgrimage still counted clean.

The Wahabi régime in the Hejaz allowed the Mahmal to come on the Haj this year with certain restrictions. They were that no music was to be played after Jeddah, no smoking and no tomb veneration.

When these restrictions were made known to the Egyptian Government they were forwarded to the Grand Mufti and the Sheikh-el-Azhar and their opinions solicited.

These dignitaries replied that the demands were in accordance with the Koran and consequently the Mahmal should be allowed to proceed. This was accepted by the Egyptian authorities, and the Mahmal and escort eventually sailed for Jeddah on the afternoon of the 8th June.

Owing to a short delay caused by the Emir-ul-Hag, a certain Azmi Pasha, one time Minister for War in Egypt, haggling over the price to be paid for the camels

to transport the Mahmal to Mecca, the party did not leave Jeddah until the evening of the 13th June.

Both upon the arrival and the departure of the Mahmal, a salute of twenty-one guns was fired by H.M.S. "Clematis," which lay at anchor in Jeddah harbour during the time the Mahmal was here.

The Mahmal left Mecca for Arafat on the evening of the 19th June, and when approximately half-way between these two places encountered a large party of Wahabis who had come from the interior to make the Haj. These people, considering such a thing idolatrous, began to call the Egyptians infidels and idolaters, and threw small pebbles and handfuls of sand at the Mahmal itself.

From witnesses, it appears that the Amir-ul-Hag requested them to desist, but as they did not comply with his request, he formed up the escort around the Mahmal, and, when one of his officers was struck by a stone, ordered the escort to open fire upon the Bedouin.

It was at first reported that the Bedouin first fired upon the Mahmal, but more recent and reliable reports assert that the Bedouin were not armed at this time and that the first shots were undoubtedly fired by the escort of the Mahmal on the orders of the Emir-ul-Hag.

Be that as it may, some 3,000 rounds were fired off as well as several rounds from the mountain battery in the escort, and the Bedouin ran for their arms, leaving about twenty-five of their number dead on the ground.

Owing to the most fortuitous presence of Ibn Saud near by, and who, when the firing first commenced, sent his son Feisal to calm the people and afterwards came himself upon the scene and restored quietness, no really serious clash resulted. But had it not been for his presence there would undoubtedly have been a massacre of the whole party and a great number of the pilgrims would have suffered as well.

It is significant that the only Egyptians injured were the officer hit by the stone and several pilgrims who were thrown from the shukdufs during the ensuing panic.

A number of pilgrims fled all the way back to Mecca and so missed the Haj.

The Mahmal proceeded to Arafat after calm had been restored and returned to Mecca after the completion of the Haj.

In Mecca trouble again arose, as it is usual for the Mahmal to be placed inside the Holy Mosque, where, in fact, it was placed, but many of the Wahabis objected to this and insisted that it should not be allowed to remain there, but be placed in the Egyptian camp outside the town.

With all this unpleasantness, the Mahmal eventually returned to Jeddah, where instructions were received for it to proceed direct to Egypt, and not proceed to Medina.

The result of this was that, of the £60,000 that the Mahmal was supposed to have brought for distribution amongst the poor and for charitable works, over £40,000 were taken back with it.

The Mahmal sailed from Jeddah on the 4th July.

14. CONCLUSION.

In conclusion I would respectfully beg the Governments concerned to adopt the recommendations set out herein, and which have only been put forward after great thought and consideration has been given to them by myself and the members of the staff of this agency, some of whom have had experience of pilgrimages for six years past, and with the conviction that their adoption would go far to put an end to many of the abuses to which the pilgrims are at present subjected, and go far to render the pilgrimage more congenial to the thousands of British Moslems who annually visit the Hejaz.

The pilgrimage as a whole may be considered satisfactory, particularly from a health point of view, chiefly owing to a plentiful supply of fresh foods and clean water both at Jeddah and Mecca also until the Ain Zebadah supply was blocked.

Thanks are due to the Hejaz Government for the perfect security prevailing in the country, which allowed the pilgrims to travel without let or hindrance, and which also allowed the food supply to reach the Jeddah and Mecca markets.

Such a state of security seems never to have existed previously, and it has been a pleasant experience to be able to furnish a nil report of murders and robberies over all the roads in the Hejaz.

The religious fanaticism of the Wahabis has no doubt caused a great deal of inconvenience, and the imposition of the tenets of their religion on the pilgrims

has caused these latter many heart-burnings, but it appears from actual experience that the prohibition against smoking in public was by far the most irksome of these regulations.

The excellent control Ibn Saud appears to have over his tribesmen, despite rumours to the contrary, was admirably illustrated during the Mahmal incident, when the Arab Bedouin, ever independent, obeyed him, despite the fact that twenty-five or more of their number lay dead before them and they outnumbered the Egyptians by thirty to one.

That Ibn Saud himself is a moderate man has been evidenced many times, but as he has built his strength on the religious fanaticism of his followers it is but natural that he should be forced along with the fixity of their ideas, and this fact accounts for the destruction of many of the tombs, which, even though venerated and worshipped by many of the sects of Islam, is not in accordance with the Koranic teaching, as has already been pointed out.

For the deplorable lack of all measures of sanitation there is no excuse, nor is there for the complete lack of order at Arafat and Muna, where many people were injured and a number even lost their lives.

It can but be hoped that the promises made by the Government and the many resolutions made at the recent Mecca Conference will be productive of a better state of affairs in the future.

I wish particularly to draw the attention of the Government of India to the excellent work done by the newly appointed permanent pilgrimage officer, Munshi Ihsanullah, who displayed great zeal, resource and indefatigable energy in dealing with the multiplicity of questions with which he was confronted. The help he rendered to the pilgrims was invaluable, and many of them went out of their way to thank me for the services he had rendered to them.

The Malay pilgrimage officer, Hadji Abdul Majid, also performed his duties in a creditable manner.

[E 5286/7/91]

No. 32.

Vice-Consul Jordan to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received September 14.)

(No. 101.)

Sir,

Jeddah, August 26, 1926.

IN continuation of my despatch No. 95 (219) of the 19th August last relative to the proposed visit of the Emir Feisal to the United Kingdom, I have the honour to forward herewith a translation of a further letter received from His Majesty the King of the Hejaz.

I have, &c.

S. R. JORDAN.

Enclosure in No. 32.

Ibn Saud to Vice-Consul Jordan.

(Translation.)

(After respects.)

August 25, 1926.

IN confirmation of the friendly relations between us and His Britannic Majesty and his Government, and in appreciation of the spirit of friendship shown by His Majesty's Government in recognising us as King of the Hejaz, Sultan of Nejd and its Dependencies, we have decided to depute our son Amir Feisal to the capital of your country to convey my greetings and thanks to His Majesty and His Majesty's Government.

So please communicate same to your Government. He will leave at the earliest possible convenience.

(With respects and greetings.)

IBN SAUD.

[E 5287/48/91]

No. 33.

Acting Consul Jordan to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received September 14.)

(No. 102.)

Sir,

Jeddah, August 27, 1926.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge receipt of your telegram No. 49 of the 18th June last, referring to Jerusalem despatch of the 28th May last, relative to the appointment of a British officer as president of the special tribunal to be established under article 6 of the Hadda Agreement, and to inform you that, owing to an oversight in Jerusalem, a copy of the despatch under reference did not reach me until the 9th July last, whereupon I addressed His Majesty the King of the Hejaz in the sense requested, incorporating in the same letter to him the question of the Presidency of the special tribunal to be established under article 2 of the Bahra Agreement.

2. I enclose herewith a copy of my letter to His Majesty under date of the 3rd August, together with a copy of his reply under date of the 6th August.

3. As in this latter communication His Majesty ignored the point raised and endeavoured to avoid the issue, I again addressed His Majesty in the sense of my letter of the 9th August, a copy of which is also enclosed.

4. I have now received from Ibn Saud a further communication (copy enclosed) under date of the 21st August, in which he agrees to the appointment of a British president provided the seat of the tribunal is removed from Amman, where he asserts it is under the influence of the Transjordan authorities.

5. Reference to my letter of the 9th April last addressed to Ibn Saud and the final paragraph of his reply thereto, forwarded under cover of my despatch No. 44 of the 15th April, regarding a similar question as regards the establishment of the tribunal under article 2 of the Bahra Agreement, would serve to show that Ibn Saud is more or less ill-disposed towards the constitution of these tribunals and prefers to settle matters by negotiation.

6. The delay in addressing Ibn Saud after the receipt of Jerusalem despatch was owing to the fact that His Majesty was to have come to Jeddah, and as it appeared to be a question which could be settled more expeditiously by discussion than by correspondence, I waited until the 3rd August before sending the letter above quoted as His Majesty had by then definitely abandoned the idea of coming to Jeddah for some weeks.

7. A copy of this despatch is being sent to Jerusalem.

I have, &c.

S. R. JORDAN.

Enclosure 1 in No. 33.

Acting Consul Jordan to Ibn Saud.

(After respects.)

Jeddah, August 3, 1926.

WITH reference to my letter of the 9th April last and your Majesty's letter dated the 28th Ramadan, 1344, relative to the establishment of the special tribunal under article 2 of the Bahra Agreement, I have the honour to inform your Majesty that I am now in receipt of a communication from His Britannic Majesty's High Commissioner at Jerusalem, relative to the establishment of the special tribunal under article 6 of the Hadda Agreement, in which are pointed out the difficulties of finding an Arab president of sufficient eminence for this tribunal, who is not likely to be interested in the litigation to be brought before the court and who would be unobjectionable to both Governments.

Under the circumstances His Britannic Majesty's High Commissioner at Jerusalem is of the opinion that the difficulty could be overcome, and the services of an impartial and unprejudiced President be secured by the appointment of a British officer or civilian to that position.

The facts set out above are relevant also to the constitution of the similar tribunal as envisaged under article 2 of the Bahra Agreement and referred to in my letter above quoted.

I shall be glad if Your Majesty will inform me if this arrangement is acceptable to your Majesty or, if not, what alternative your Majesty would suggest.

(Compliments.)

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Enclosure 2 in No. 33.

Ibn Saud to Acting Consul Jordan.

(Translation.)

(After respects.)

August 6, 1926.

WITH reference to your letter No. 492 of the 3rd instant, I inform your Excellency that I believe that the constitution of the tribunal referred to in the Hadda Agreement was decided only for settling matters differed about between the two parties, and the object of sending our representative to Transjordan was not for attending the meetings of such tribunal.

It has also been agreed through our previous communications to your Excellency at the beginning that sending them was merely for making acquaintance with the British representatives there, and understanding with them the matters of the property looted from our tribes by the tribes belonging to the Government of Transjordan, and for recovering same.

I beg your Excellency to inform his Excellency His Britannic Majesty's High Commissioner in Palestine that referring indisputable cases of loot to a tribunal for investigation after some time may result in an inclination by certain tribes to make raids from time to time because of the delay in trying them, and particularly when they know that the tribunal will be held in their country and under the shade (protection) of the wings of their relatives and friends.

By this they will find an opportunity to take the time which will pass without punishing them as means to cause some disorder and to make some evil actions which do not agree with the wishes of both parties who ought to be careful in settling such matters as soon as possible so that the transgressor will know what measures are taken against what his guilty hands commits.

We have, however, instructed our said representative by telegram to enter into the necessary negotiations with the persons appointed by Transjordan to settle all outstanding matters regarding those loots in such suitable manner which will reserve our rights, in order to prove our sure intentions to have disputes settled and peace and security established on the frontiers of both parties.

With best respects and greetings.

Enclosure 3 in No. 33.

Acting Consul-General to Ibn Saud.

(After respects.)

Jeddah, August 9, 1926.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge receipt of your Majesty's letter of the 6th instant referring to my letter of the 3rd instant.

As there would appear to be a slight misunderstanding of the contents of this letter I beg to point out to your Majesty that the contents of this letter which relate to the future establishment of the special tribunals provided for in the Bahra and Hadda agreements, have no relation whatever with my telephone message to your Majesty's Minister for Foreign Affairs on the morning of the 5th August last.

I hasten to explain that the representative whom your Majesty sent to Transjordan to meet the chief British representative and to arrange reciprocally for the return of all looted properties, presented a list of the loot which he demanded should be returned to your Majesty's subjects, and stated that his instructions were final in that respect.

As your Majesty will readily realise, there are two sides to every question, and it was in order that this delegation's visit should not prove fruitless that I requested the Minister for Foreign Affairs to request your Majesty to send the necessary instructions to your Majesty's representative in order that he could then enter negotiations with the guidance of the British representative and so assure an amicable settlement of the questions under consideration.

I have to thank your Majesty for the kind and prompt attention your Majesty has given to this request, and I sincerely hope that the resultant settlement will be acceptable to both countries engaged and assure peace on your Majesty's frontiers.

I would, however, point out that the question of the presidency of the special tribunals under the above agreement would appear to be one of the first importance, and a settlement of this point would be conducive to the early constitution of these tribunals and the enjoyment of the advantage to be derived from them. I shall be glad if your Majesty will acquaint me with your Majesty's suggestions in this respect.

(Compliments.)

Enclosure 4 in No. 33.

Ibn Saud to Acting Consul Jordan.

(Translation.)

(After respects.)

August 21, 1926.

IN reply to your Excellency's letter of the 9th instant, I inform you that I had expressed my view in one of my previous letters to you regarding the constitution of the tribunal referred to in the Bahra Agreement.

In this connection I hereby point out to your Excellency that the missing things and the loot which our tribes have suffered from at the ends of the boundaries have nearly become certain and a frequent thing, and I believe that such certain matters need not be referred to the said tribunal, and it is rather easy for the competent authorities to settle such cases at the earliest convenience so that no time will be lost in attaining the object by which the transgressor will realise the great care taken for keeping order and peace and the sure desire of returning the properties to their owners to maintain justice and to strengthen the bonds of the good relations between both parties, the fact which, I have no doubt, your Excellency will endeavour to establish by every possible means.

I therefore beg you to inform his Excellency the British High Commissioner in Palestine to be good enough to arrange for the necessary steps in this matter until the opportunity permits the return of all loot to its owners.

I have to inform your Excellency of the necessity of drawing his Excellency the High Commissioner's attention to the fact that the above-mentioned tribunal held preliminary at Maan ought to be transferred to another place, which should be neutral and void of the effect and influence of the Government of Transjordan, and in a calm situation where the delegations can quite freely perform their duties, and, in this circumstance, there will be no objection to the presidency of such tribunal being given to a British official or officer, who should have no official capacity in the Government of Transjordan, and he should be so capable and becoming to be looked upon with confidence and reliance with a view to impartiality or inclination to one party.

With sincere greetings and respects.

[E 5409/367/91]

No. 34.

Vice-Consul Jordan to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received September 20.)

(No. 106. Secret.)

Sir,

Jeddah, September 3, 1926.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith my report on the situation in the Hejaz during the period the 1st-31st August, 1926.

Copies of this report are being sent to Egypt, Jerusalem (2), Bagdad, Aden, Simla, Beirut (for Damascus), Khartum (through Port Sudan) and Singapore.

I have, &c.

S. R. JORDAN.

Enclosure 1 in No. 34.

Jeddah Report for the Period August 1-31, 1926.

SINCE the completion of the pilgrimage and the World's Moslem Conference at Mecca, from which Ibn Saud apparently learned that he must rely upon his own resources and not the assistance of the many other sects of Islam to bring about the improvements and modifications considered essential in the Hejaz, the local authorities have been showing considerable activity in the reorganisation of the various Government Departments. Customs, Municipalities, Health Administration, and the army have all had a share.

2. The military situation during the period under report has undergone a very favourable change on account of the settlement of the dispute between Ibn Saud and the Bani Malik and the Dukhana Arab tribes, these latter erroneously reported as "Tihana" in my last report.

The first forces Ibn Saud sent against these tribes after their revolt were

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defeated, and Ibn Saud thereupon collected a strong force with which to subdue them, but before despatching this force, sent a message calling upon the leading sheikhs of the two tribes to come to Mecca or he would take action against them.

The sheikhs obeyed, and upon arrival in Mecca explained that the cause of their revolt and the reason why they attacked the caravan and robbed the money, &c., was because a number of the members of this caravan molested them and assaulted some of their women.

The King, hearing their explanation, congratulated them upon their actions, and assured them that if they had not killed the malefactors he should have had them killed himself. He also awarded the tribes compensation, and the whole matter has been settled satisfactorily and to the delight of both parties.

3. Since the completion of the pilgrimage the authorities have been actively engaged in enlisting recruits for the army. These are being offered a small salary and given an Ikhwan dress, i.e., Abbaya and Wahabi head-dress, and are being trained in the use of arms.

The many pieces of cannons and all the more modern field-guns which were in Jeddah have been transported to Mecca or beyond, and it would appear as if Ibn Saud has some definite idea and motive for this concentration and the organisation of a fighting force.

Not only is voluntary enlistment solicited, but the sheikhs of the various quarters of the towns are ordered to supply so many men according to the size and population of their various quarters.

There seems little doubt but that these forces will be either for the repulse of the Yemen forces should they advance further into the Asir, or for what is more probable still, the garrisoning of Asir, as it is becoming more evident that both the Imam of Yemen and Ibn Saud have decided that the Idrissi must cease to exist as an independent ruler, and are going to divide the country between them. In this respect I would particularly draw attention to the significance of the statement made to me by Suleiman Pasha Shafik in a recent conversation set out under the political section of this report.

4. The local authorities have issued strong orders forbidding the sale of arms and also that anybody having arms in their possession must surrender them to the Government, who will pay for them at the ordinary market rate.

Several arrests have been made for violations of these orders to date, and the culprits have been so severely punished that there is little inducement for others to follow their bad example.

5. The political situation during the period under report has been interesting and there is no doubt that the authorities are making great efforts both politically and economically to consolidate their position in the country and bring about the reforms the lack of which was so noticeable during the last Haj and about which so much was said at the recent conference.

6. The visit of the King's eldest son, Saud, to Egypt fulfils a twofold purpose. Other than the operation on his eye, the occasion has been utilised to the fullest extent to bring about a closer feeling of friendship between the two countries, and from the published reports of the warm reception which is being accorded to him it appears as if this aim has been successfully attained.

7. Arrangements are being made for the King's second son, Feisul, to visit Europe in order to thank the Powers who have recognised Ibn Saud's control over the Hejaz for their recognition, and Feisul proposes to visit England, France and Holland.

Russia has also recognised Ibn Saud, but it is thought that the cold would be too intense for Feisul to proceed to Moscow for a similar purpose.

Feisul will be accompanied by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dr. Abdullah Bey Damluji, M.B.E., during his European trips, and this occasion will also, no doubt, be used to the fullest to promote a successful counter-propaganda against that pursued by the enemies of the Wahabis.

8. Tewfik Bey Sherrif, the general secretary of the World's Moslem Conference, recently left for India after obtaining that Government's permission through this agency.

In a conversation with a member of the staff of this agency just before his departure, he stated quite frankly that he was proceeding for the purposes of propaganda, and that his first aim was to defeat the Ali brothers, Mohammed and Shaukat, of the Indian Khilafists, and that he was sure that, with the assistance of Hakim Ajmal Khan, Dr. Kitchlow and Abu Kalam Azad, he would succeed

He stated that if necessary he already had men in India who could and would create trouble amongst the leaders of the Khilafists themselves and that he intended to co-operate with the Tanzim Committee.

He further stated that the present was a very difficult and critical time for Ibn Saud, but that, despite the storms of opposition on all sides, he was sure the King would come out victoriously from all this trouble.

He pointed out that Ibn Saud was on terms of close friendship with Afghanistan and the head of the Ismailia sect in India, and that the Emir Saud would strengthen the friendship between Egypt and the Hejaz, and that Feisul would carry on the good work in Europe, more particularly in England, with whom Ibn Saud wished to be in the closest friendship as he (the King) was sure that England's policy towards the Hejaz was an open and frank policy and hid no ulterior motives as the policies of some of the other European Powers.

He added that the Wahabis were not afraid of the Moslems of the world, but rather that some European Power might benefit by the disunity amongst the Moslems to the detriment of these latter.

Referring to a possible attack from the Yemen, he was rather bombastic and stated that it would be welcomed, as then there would soon be a Nejd Governor in Sanaa, and Ibn Saud's territory would be completely surrounded by British countries and peace would be permanent.

He added that although slight dissensions had broken out in Arabia, they were purely local and that very soon Ibn Saud would make a tour of his territories and all would be reconsolidated.

From my own observations and from various sources of information I believe the above, with the exception of the bombastic attitude in regard to the Yemen, to be a fairly sensible appreciation of the present conditions in the Hejaz, and the lucidity with which Tewfik Sherrif apparently gave this statement would mark him as a clever man.

9. Suleiman Pasha Shafik, wrongly reported as Taufik in my last report, once Minister for War in Turkey and now one of Ibn Saud's chief advisers, came to Jeddah some weeks back in order to inspect the books of the Ministry of Finance and the Customs and Quarantine Administrations, and during his stay called on me, ostensibly to seek information as to certain customs regulations.

After discussing the value of "reals," "Maria Therese dollars," or "Frank dollars," as they are variously known in the Hejaz, Suleiman Pasha passed on to the general financial question of the Hejaz, and in this connection brought up the question of the exploitation of the natural resources of the Hejaz.

He spoke of the oil-bearing country at Dubba, near Wedj, and that of the Farasan Islands. Also of copper deposits in the hills behind Lith and 80 per cent. iron ore deposits near Abha.

(Other than these, I have also been informed of rich alluvial tin deposits in the Wadi running down to the sea at Rabigh. My informant was an Indian pilgrim who is in the Survey Department of India, and he was most emphatic in his assertions that the alluvial tin was present in workable quantities and that the hills behind no doubt held ore deposits.)

Suleiman Pasha, continuing, stated that the Farasan Islands must eventually belong to Ibn Saud, as he was friendly with both sections of the Idrissi, who had practically ceased to exist as a Power, and that it was only a matter of time until the country would be divided between him and the Imam of Yemen.

He added that the Idrissi would be a glorified sort of Governor under Ibn Saud and that the natural frontier between the Yemen and the Hejaz was a line south of Jizan and Sabia, which left the Farasan Islands to Ibn Saud.

He asked if there were British companies who would undertake the development of these resources under the Hejaz Government. I replied in the negative most emphatically, and informed him that as long as the Farasan Islands belonged to the Idrissi His Majesty's Government could entertain no proposal from the Hejaz Government as to their future development, but that for the resources actually within the Hejaz itself, expert surveys and, perhaps, in the case of oil, trial borings, were an indispensable preliminary, and I had no doubt that, under reasonable conditions and eventual exploitation rights, the Hejaz Government would be well advised to consult British companies interested, as these, with their greater capital and experience and fixed exchange, they would be in a much better position to exploit any natural resources in the Hejaz with more advantage to the local Government than continental companies.

The conversation ended at this point, but the reference to the Farasan Islands and the setting out even of the "natural frontiers," which might more suitably be called "economic" frontiers, would serve to show that thought and consideration had been given to the matter in Government circles, and the present recruiting might not be unconnected with these aspirations.

10. I am informed that the Idrissi and his family (*i.e.*, the ex-Idrissi, Sayid Ali) have all arrived in Mecca and are being treated as special royal guests. They have only just arrived and I have no further information for the present, but the sequence of events detailed above all point in one direction and that towards the Idrissi's territory. The fact that the Italians are arming the Imam of Yemen might be causing Ibn Saud to hurry up and assert his authority over such area of the Asir as he considers his due without delay.

11. The persons who were arrested in Mecca some time back and sent to Taif have now been deported by the Hejaz authorities.

Sherif Mohsen, who was arrested at the same time and sent to Riyadh, still remains there.

12. The local authorities have accepted the proposal of the High Commissioner for Palestine that a British officer or civilian should be appointed president of the Special Tribunal to be constituted under article 6 of the Hadda Agreement for the settlement of disputes between frontier tribes and the return of looted animals and properties and the punishment of the offenders.

13. The Soviet representative in Jeddah has informed my Italian colleague that he has received instructions to suppress the Soviet diplomatic agency, and until further instructions it will be simply a consulate-general.

14. The religious situation since the departure of the pilgrims remains calm, the only event of importance being Ibn Saud's declaration of the inviolability of the Prophet's Tomb at Medina.

This will give general satisfaction to the orthodox Moslems, though perhaps create a little discontent amongst his own followers, who, nevertheless, when besieging Medina, invariably respected the tomb.

15. A small incident of a more or less religious nature occurred at Mecca a short while ago. This was that a number of the young men of Mecca went to a place called Shuada, some 2 miles from the town, and there consumed too freely contraband whisky or wines and in their drunken state created such a row that the police were called out to quiet them. In the ensuing *mélée* one policeman was shot by a drunken reveller.

16. The economic situation shows no great signs of improvement and money is still short in the Government coffers.

Since the pilgrimage, however, honest efforts are being made by the Government to reorganise the customs and other administrations, and in this respect and in order to encourage and facilitate trade in the country, a number of reforms have been instituted.

17. The first is an all-round reduction of at least 25 per cent. of the customs duties payable on necessities.

18. The second is the abolishing of a pernicious practice of collecting 10 per cent. of the value of all goods that left either Mecca, Medina or Taif for the Bedouin of the desert or for the Nejd. This was instituted by Hussein, and its abolition is a step in the right direction and will go far to endear Ibn Saud to the desert tribes.

19. A further reform is the abolition of the kushan on donkeys. This does not sound of much importance, but it is really a boon, because if the goods pay extra customs and the animal carrying the goods is also taxed, the price of the commodity goes up by leaps and bounds.

20. The motor concession accorded to a number of Hejazis and passed on by them to an Egyptian-Jew syndicate has been cancelled by the Government, and a notice has been published that in future concessions granted by the Government are non-transferable unless the Government's permission is first obtained.

21. In view of the absolute lack of sanitary measures during the Haj, the local Government are showing great activity in the reorganisation of the Hejaz Health Administration.

In order to facilitate them in this work they have, through this agency, requested the Palestinian authorities to furnish them with a copy of the Palestinian Administration's rules and regulations as a guide to drawing up a similar scheme for the Hejaz.

22. A strong effort is also being made to put down bribery and corruption amongst the Government officials, and a set of rules to govern their actions has been issued and each official forced to sign them and declare that he will abide thereby.

23. A meeting of the notables of the country was recently held in Mecca, and I attach hereto the report of the results of this gathering as published in the local newspaper, "Um-ul-Kura."

24. Four slaves have been repatriated during the period under report.

S. R. JORDAN.

Enclosure 2 in No. 34.

Organisation of the Hejaz Departments.

AFFAIRS in the Hejaz, since the conquest to the end of the pilgrimage season, were carried out as necessity and interest required, because the period before the Haj was not long enough to put into force the rules and regulations according to which affairs are to be carried out. Whenever anything happened, temporary steps were taken for same.

Most of the things which require consideration are collected, and after the pilgrims have departed, the Government began to think of putting into force the necessary regulations and of taking the steps which facilitate dealings with the people and maintain the comfort of the pilgrims.

High orders were issued for the competent authorities in Jeddah to be requested to go to Mecca to meet with the members of the Legislative Council and to discuss such necessary matters. The following points have been submitted to the combined council:—

- (1.) Putting regulation for His Majesty's representative, pointing out his provinces and his connections with other departments.
- (2.) The authority of the local councils and the things that come within their province.
- (3.) The employees of the Government Departments and their responsibilities.
- (4.) How references should be made in work and putting a regulation for dealings on a firm basis.
- (5.) How employees should be rewarded or punished.
- (6.) To organise the municipalities.
- (7.) To organise the Pilgrimage and Health Departments.
- (8.) To consider the question of facilitating communications between Jeddah and Mecca.

The above are the points which the council is considering under the presidency of Amir Feisul.

[E 5411/7/91]

No. 35.

Acting Consul Jordan to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received September 20.)

(No. 108.)

Sir,

Jeddah, September 6, 1926.

IN continuation of my despatch No. 107 of the 5th instant, relative to the Emir Feisal's visit to the United Kingdom, I have the honour to forward herewith a translation of a further communication received from His Majesty the King of the Hejaz.

I have, &c.

S. R. JORDAN.

Enclosure in No. 35.

Abdul Aziz-bin-Abdul Rahman-al-Feisal-al-Saud, Mecca, to the Acting British Agent and Consul, Jeddah, dated Safar 27, 1345 (September 4, 1926).

(Translation.)

(After respects.)

WITH reference to my previous letter, I inform your Excellency that it has been decided that our son Feisal will leave for Europe for his visit by the boat leaving Jeddah on the 8th September, 1926.

He will go direct to London to offer on my behalf the thanks and gratitude to His Britannic Majesty the great King and His Majesty's Government.

He will be accompanied by Dr. Abdullah Bey Damluji, the Director for Foreign Affairs, and his private secretary, Sheikh Abdullah-al-Ibrahim-el-Fadhl, and three servants.

I beg you to inform your Government accordingly.

With respects and greetings.

[E 5515/3239/91]

No. 36.

Mr. Wingfield to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received September 27.)

(No. 796. Confidential.)

Sir,

Rome, September 21, 1926.

I TOOK advantage of a visit I was paying yesterday to Count Bordonaro in connection with another question to mention to him that you had much appreciated his courtesy in communicating to me the news of the signature of the treaty between Italy and the Imam of Yemen, and to ask, as suggested in your despatch No. 1257 of the 13th instant, whether he could give me any information as to the exact implications of the recognition as King promised to the Imam, which was of particular interest to us in view of the Imam's relations with the Aden Protectorate.

2. Count Bordonaro first told me of the memorandum communicated by Sir W. Tyrrell to the Italian Ambassador and said that, though this document was at present in course of examination, he could already tell me that Signor Mussolini was disposed to welcome the idea of a full discussion of the whole question, for which purpose the Governor of Eritrea was being summoned to Rome. He went on to say that the text of the recently concluded treaty, which had only reached Rome some two days previously, was being examined here and would shortly be communicated to the Foreign Office by the Italian Ambassador in London; meanwhile, however, he could tell me that the recognition of the Imam as King was stipulated in general terms and was not accompanied by any description of the boundaries of the dominions over which his sovereignty was to be recognised. It would be seen that the treaty dealt chiefly with questions of commerce, trade in arms, &c.

I have, &c.

CHARLES WINGFIELD.

[E 5639/3239/91]

No. 37.

Mr. Wingfield to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received October 4.)

(No. 840. Confidential.)

Sir,

Rome, October 1, 1926.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 796, Confidential, of the 21st ultimo, I have the honour to enclose herewith a translation of the Italian text of the treaty signed on the 2nd ultimo by the Imam of Yemen and the Governor of Eritrea.

2. As this treaty was only handed to me at a late hour this afternoon, the translation is a hurried one, and a copy of the Italian text will not be ready in time to catch this evening's bag. It must therefore follow by the next.

3. To-day's midday papers announced the arrival in Rome of the Governor of Eritrea "in order to report to the Prime Minister on the policy pursued by him in the Yemen, which has happily resulted in the conclusion of a commercial treaty," and his Excellency doubtless brought the treaty in question to Rome with him.

I have, &c.

CHARLES WINGFIELD.

Enclosure in No. 37.

Treaty between Italy and the Yemen.

(Translation.)

HIS Majesty Victor Emmanuel III, King of Italy, and His Majesty the Imam Jahia, Emir-el-Mumenin, King of the Yemen, desirous of making more close and lasting the friendship between their two kingdoms and wishing to facilitate and develop the economic relations between their two countries;

His Majesty the King of Italy by the instrumentality of his representative, his Excellency the Cavaliere Jacopo Gasparini, Governor of Eritrea; and

His Majesty the King of the Yemen, the Imam Jahia, Emir-el-Mumenin, have together agreed upon what follows:—

ARTICLE 1.

The Government of His Majesty the King of Italy recognise the full and absolute independence of the Yemen and of its sovereign, His Majesty the Imam Jahia.

The Italian Government will not interfere in the Kingdom of His Majesty the King of Yemen in any manner which is incompatible with what has been said in the first paragraph of the present article.

ARTICLE 2.

The two Governments undertake to facilitate commercial exchanges between their respective countries.

ARTICLE 3.

The Government of His Majesty the King of Yemen declare that it is their desire to import from Italy the supplies ("forniture"), i.e., the means and the technical material which can advantageously be employed for the economic development of the Yemen, as also the technical personnel.

And the Italian Government declare that they intend to do all that is possible in order to provide the means and the technical material and personnel in the manner most convenient as regards to quality, price and salaries.

ARTICLE 4.

What has been said in articles 2 and 3 does not limit the liberty of the two parties with regard to commerce and supplies ("forniture").

ARTICLE 5.

No merchant of the two States will be allowed to import or to carry on trade in articles prohibited by the two Governments in their respective countries.

Both the two Governments will have the right of confiscating articles, imported into their respective countries in spite of a prohibition of import, or of trade in that article, after such prohibition has been published.

ARTICLE 6.

The present treaty will not enter into force until the ratification of His Majesty the King of Italy has reached His Majesty the King of Yemen, the Imam Jahia.

ARTICLE 7.

The present treaty will continue in force for ten years from the day of the ratification provided for in article 6, and six months before it ceases to be valid the two parties will come to an understanding in case they desire to replace it or to prolong it.

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ARTICLE 8.

In faith of the above His Majesty the King of Yemen, the Imam Jahia, and his Excellency the Cavaliere Jacopo Gasparini, in the name of His Majesty the King of Italy, have signed the present treaty drawn up in two exactly identical copies, in the Arabic and in the Italian languages.

As, however, there is nobody at the Court of His Majesty the King of Yemen who knows perfectly the meaning of the Italian language; as the conferences for the present treaty of friendship and commerce were carried on by both parties in Arabic, and as his Excellency the Cavaliere Jacopo Gasparini has assured himself that the Arabic text is exactly equivalent to the Italian; the two parties agree to be bound, in case of doubt or of divergent interpretations of the two texts, by the Arabic text interpreted according to the classical language.

Dated Sanaa, September 2, 1926.

IMAM JAHIA.
GASPARINI.

[E 5657/2660/91]

No. 38.

Memorandum communicated by the Italian Embassy.—(Received October 5.)

(Translation.)

THE Italian Government have examined with deep attention the memorandum, dated the 8th September, on the subject of the Arab States on the Red Sea, which the Foreign Office have communicated to the Italian Embassy in London.

Bearing in mind the policy of friendly co-operation which has borne good fruit in other spheres, the Italian Government share the opinion expressed by the British Government regarding the utility of considering and discussing, in the customary spirit of cordiality and mutual comprehension of interests, the respective Italian and British interests in that region.

In view of this the Italian Government consider it opportune that, taking advantage of the presence in Rome of the Governor of Eritrea, conversations of a technical nature should take place with the British Embassy and with the technical delegates to whom the British Government might entrust the duty of engaging in such conversations.

Italian Embassy, London, October 4, 1926.

[E 5739/3239/91]

No. 39.

Sir R. Graham to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received October 11.)

(No. 856.)

Sir,

Rome, October 8, 1926.

WITH reference to Mr. Wingfield's despatch No. 840 of the 1st October, I have the honour to report that considerable importance has been attached in the press to the Treaty of Friendship and Commerce concluded between Italy and the Yemen. It is welcomed not merely as an economic achievement of importance, but as marking a noteworthy advance in Italian Near Eastern policy. It is emphasised that the Yemen—"people, Government and King"—is the most solid and compact national formation in Arabia. The treaty reaffirms a friendship of old standing and consolidates economic and commercial relations between Italy and the Yemen.

2 The "Tribuna" (2nd October) makes it clear that Italy's presence in the Yemen should not be taken to imply a modification in the Arabian situation; the treaty is merely a clear confirmation of a situation of fact which was already in existence. The necessity for Italy to establish good relations with the Arabian States opposite Eritrea is evident. These States, attracted by Italy's increased prestige, spontaneously endeavour to secure an improvement in their relations with Rome. In this field Italian policy should not be regarded as "monopolistic." The treaty with the Yemen is at once an important episode of Italian Islamic policy and the most typical example of Signor Mussolini's "policy of prestige."

3. The "Giornale d'Italia" (October 2) emphasises the merely "local" value of the treaty, which should not be put in relation with other events. The Arabs in general and the people of the Yemen in particular treat the Italians with special sympathy. This is not due, as the British may possibly suspect, to some political manoeuvre, but to the fact that the Arabs do not doubt the sincerity of Italy's peaceful intentions.

4. The Rome correspondent of the "Corriere della Sera" (Oct. 2) writes that the conclusion of the treaty bears out the excellence of Italian policy towards the Moslem world and the statesmanlike qualities of Signor Gasparini, the Governor of Eritrea. The Imam Yahya has realised that Italy does not harbour any ambitions or imperialistic designs in regard to the Yemen. No country has anything to fear from the treaty. Indeed, the fact that a European country has succeeded in consolidating its friendly relations with an Arabian potentate of unquestionable importance should be regarded as beneficial to European civilisation and as a precious element of peace in the Near East.

5. An editorial article in the "Corriere della Sera" (October 5) describes the treaty with the Yemen as an important step in Italian colonial policy. The Imam Yahya was an independent ruler *de facto*, but it is by this treaty that his independence is solemnly recognised. At the end of the war there was some talk of a British mandate over the Yemen, but the scheme went no further. The "Corriere" calls attention to the uncertain policy pursued by Great Britain and to the missions of Colonel Lawrence, Major Philby and Lieutenant-Colonel Jacob, who were all more or less disowned by the London Government. Add to this that in the war against Turkey the Imam Yahya observed a strict neutrality, while the Idrisi of Asir sided with the British. All these facts have contributed to the formation of an atmosphere of coolness between the Yemen and Great Britain, which Italy, who is on friendly terms with both, may help to dispel.

6. The "Resto del Carlino" holds out the possibility that Italy's rapprochement with the Yemen may shatter the Senussi's position as the strenuous and irreconcilable champion of an Islamic united front, mainly if not exclusively directed against Italy.

7. The fear expressed by an Arab newspaper of Cairo that a policy which leans on a single European Power to the exclusion of others may not be convenient to the Yemen has given rise to a certain degree of resentment here. The "Giornale d'Italia" (October 6) declares that the Egyptian newspaper has no right to interfere in a question in which it is not directly interested. Italy aims at the development of her economic relations with the Yemen and does not claim a privileged position. The "Tribuna" (October 6) remarks that the principal feature of the treaty is the total absence of those *arrière-pensées* which usually perturb the relations between the Eastern and Western Powers.

I have, &c.

R. GRAHAM.

No. 40.

Sir Austen Chamberlain to Mr. Mayers (Jeddah).

(Nos. 66 and 67.)

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, October 14, 1926.

(R.) MR. JORDAN'S despatch No. 63 of 13th May: Hejaz air service.

Please inform Ibn Saud that His Majesty's Government have carefully considered his request for assistance in organising air services.

They will be glad to assist him to obtain the services of two civilian pilots and six mechanics on personal contracts, which must provide that they will not be employed on warlike services outside Ibn Saud's domains. The estimated cost of maintaining in service the aircraft which he already possesses is about £10,000 a year. In view of the fact that His Majesty's Government are unable to obtain Moslem pilots, they are glad to note from the list of places between which His Majesty has stated that he desires to establish air services that he has no intention of bringing the Holy Places within the sphere of these services.

If Ibn Saud now wishes to proceed with the proposal, His Majesty's Government will ascertain what terms would be acceptable to the British personnel, and will send you a specimen of the contract which the aviators would be prepared to sign.

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You could then negotiate the contracts with Ibn Saud on behalf of the prospective employees, making clear to him that this procedure is only adopted for reasons of convenience and is not intended to prejudice freedom of contracting parties to make their own terms. (End of R.)

(Confidential.)

We are not prepared to go further than the above, and if Ibn Saud is not satisfied with proposed arrangement we must presumably allow him to go elsewhere for what he needs.

[C 10957/10060/18]

No. 41.

Sir Austen Chamberlain to Sir R. Graham (Rome).

(No. 1400.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 14, 1926.

THE Italian Chargé d'Affaires handed me to-day a copy of Signor Mussolini's record of our conversation at Leghorn which he desired me to examine and confirm. I said that I would have the record translated and would communicate with him again when I had read it.

Signor Rosso then said that it had been intimated to the Italian Government that Dr. Stresemann had been a little surprised that he had received no account of the Leghorn conversation from the Italian side. Signor Mussolini would be glad if I would let him know how much of it I had communicated to Dr. Stresemann in order that he might follow the same lines. I accordingly read to Signor Rosso the first paragraph of my telegram No. 114 of the 4th October to Lord D'Abernon.

Signor Rosso next enquired whether I was now in a position to indicate the nature of the response which I was going to make to the communication from the French Government about the mobilisation of German railway bonds, and I gave him the substance of the communication which I am to-day making to the French Ambassador as well as my further suggestion to both M. Briand and Dr. Stresemann as to the desirability for consultation with other interested Powers.

Signor Rosso asked if I could indicate any date for the visit of a British expert to Rome to discuss the Red Sea questions. The Governor of Eritrea was now in Rome and it would be a convenience to him if a date could be fixed. I replied that several departments of His Majesty's Government were concerned and I feared that it would be a little time before I could give the necessary instructions to the British representative. I would hasten matters as much as possible, but the meeting of the Imperial Conference brought a great addition to the daily work of us all. Signor Rosso asked if he might inform Signor Mussolini that the idea of a conference was accepted in principle, and I answered definitely in the affirmative.

Finally, Signor Rosso informed me that the Lithuanian Government had sent the Italian Government a memorandum making various charges against the Polish Government and indicating a fear of Polish aggression. He enquired whether the Lithuanian Government had made a like communication to me, and what reply I intended to send, and he asked if he might be permitted to enquire as to the character of the conversation between M. Krassin and myself. I informed Signor Rosso that I had received no communication from the Lithuanian Government, and I gave him an account of what had passed between M. Krassin and myself as recorded in my despatch to Sir Robert Hodgson. As M. Krassin had spoken to me about the Polish attitude towards Lithuania, my reply to M. Krassin indicated the nature of the reply which I should make to the Lithuanian Government if they did approach me. I should add only that if they could not settle their grievances with Poland in the most direct and desirable way, namely by friendly negotiation between the two Governments, an appeal to the League of Nations was open to them, and I should encourage them to appeal to the League rather than to myself. I had, however, derived the impression that the Lithuanian Government was rather inclined to exaggerate or to imagine incidents for the purpose of propaganda, especially about the time when the Council of the League was meeting.

I am, &c.

AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN.

[E 5859/900/91]

No. 42.

Acting Consul Mayers to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received October 18.)

(No. 114. Confidential.)

Sir,

Jeddah, September 28, 1926.

I HAVE the honour to report that when Ibn Saud was in Jeddah recently on the occasion of the return of the Emir Saud from Egypt, I took the opportunity of bringing to the notice of His Majesty the communication contained in paragraph 2 of your despatch No. 91 of the 12th August last to Mr. Jordan.

2. Ibn Saud did not appear satisfied with the very general terms of my communication, and asked for further details. I therefore told him that in Oman, for example, and even on the northern coast of the Persian Gulf, slaves of African origin were continually being encountered, whose stories all pointed to Nejd as the agents for their sale into those parts.

3. Ibn Saud did not deny this, but said that the British Government already knew his attitude towards the slave traffic. His policy was to see that slaves already in bondage were treated properly, and meanwhile he was prepared to help discountenance fresh importations. But slavery was a habit engrained in the customs of the people. He felt sure that any attempt on his part to put an end to slavery would involve him in a struggle with his subjects which would inevitably mean loss of authority. Even if he appealed for a religious ruling on the matter, he felt that he would raise an acrimonious debate which would in all probability end against him. It was impossible for him at present to forbid slavery.

4. I replied that His Majesty's Government were grateful to him for his humane attitude. Slavery, an age-long institution, would not be abolished in a day. Nevertheless, much had been done to mitigate it in the last century, and there was no doubt that a gradual change in the minds of slave-owners was being effected. I again asked whether, if His Majesty could not at present see his way to stopping the slave traffic in his own dominions, he could at least prevent the movement of slaves eastward into the territories of rulers who were under treaty obligations with us to put an end to the traffic.

5. Ibn Saud reminded me that he could not control all the ways of the wide desert, and restated his attitude towards the slavery question. He might give orders, but in a matter such as this could not be sure of strict obedience beyond the letter of his commands. I replied that I understood the difficulties he encountered, but I asked if it would not be possible for him to write to his viceroys on the Persian Gulf and express to them his displeasure that the export of slaves by Nejd subjects still continued. With a show of warmth he promised faithfully to do this. I thanked him, and said that I had no doubt that a declaration of his opinion on the matter would give his recommendations all the weight they required.

6. A member of the staff of the agency who was present at the interview discussed the matter later in the same day with Sheikh Youssef Yassin, Acting Foreign Minister. Sheikh Youssef confirmed His Majesty's promise to write to the sheikhs concerned. He argued that slavery was permitted by the Koran in the case of prisoners taken in the holy war. The traditions sanctioned slavery, while they laid down that slaves were to be properly clothed and fed and considerately treated. He added that British authorities in regions under their protection could confiscate slaves offered for sale. Sheikh Youssef's opinions do not amount to much, but they probably reflect his conversations on this topic with the King.

7. Sheikh Youssef Yassin made finally a reference to the resolution on slavery carried at the Islamic Conference and reported by Mr. Jordan in his despatch No. 89 of the 20th July. Ibn Saud has apparently not forgotten this resolution, which is beyond a doubt inimical to the importation of fresh slaves into the country, although it might sanction the retention and commercial interchange of such slaves at present in Ibn Saud's dominions who are descendants of prisoners taken in old religious wars. Moslem slaves who can prove that their origin is other than the above have presumably a right, even from the point of view of Islamic usage, to their freedom.

I have, &c.

NORMAN MAYERS.

[C 11092/9326/22]

No. 43.

*Translation of M. Mussolini's Record of his Conversation with the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs at Leghorn on September 30, 1926.**

(Comments and Corrections by Sir Austen Chamberlain as shown in the margin refer to passages in square brackets.)

(Extract.)

YEMEN.

Mussolini: Faithful to the policy of loyalty with regard to yourself, we have given you intimation of the conclusion of the agreement with the Imam, and we have also communicated to you a summary of that agreement. It is essentially pacific, and does not injure the interests of others, while it affords the possibility of commerce to Italy and her colony Eritrea. As regards other matters, I accept your suggestion of an Anglo-Italian meeting at which the situation in the Arabian Peninsula can be studied. The Governor of Eritrea is in Rome and can await the arrival of a British representative.

Chamberlain: You understand that everything which may occur on the route to India interests us in a special manner. In addition, it was necessary to avoid a conflict between England and Italy being caused under the "pavillons" of Assir on the one hand and Yemen on the other. [If that eventuality is avoided England has no objection to raise to the agreement arrived at with the Imam, and the general position in Arabia can therefore be considered by us together.]

"It was to avoid that eventuality that I communicated with you. I shall gladly accept your proposal for a meeting of our experts at which the general position in Arabia can be considered by us together."

[N.B.—I had not seen the agreement and therefore carefully refrained from expressing an opinion on it.]

[E 5796/7/91]

No. 44.

Foreign Office to Acting Consul Mayers (Jeddah).

(No. 115. Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 18, 1926.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Austen Chamberlain to inform you that, on the 11th October, he received a visit from the Emir Feisal, who was accompanied by Abdulla Bey Damludji, Hejaz Minister for Foreign Affairs, who interpreted in French throughout. Mr. S. R. Jordan was also present.

2. Upon the Emir being introduced, Sir Austen Chamberlain expressed his pleasure at meeting His Highness and hoped that he had enjoyed his stay in London, and that His Highness's visit to this country would serve to strengthen the bonds of friendship already existing between His Majesty's Government and His Highness's father, the Sultan and King.

3. His Highness replied that he was honoured and pleased at having the opportunity, on behalf of his father, of meeting His Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and added that he had enjoyed his stay in London immensely.

4. Sir Austen Chamberlain then stated that he had been informed that His Highness wished to ask him several questions.

* Italian text was communicated by the Italian Chargé d'Affaires on October 14 (see No. 41).

5. Emir Feisal requested to be informed of the views of His Majesty's Government in regard to the situation created in the Yemen by the recently concluded Italian-Yemen Treaty.

6. Sir Austen Chamberlain replied that he had been out of the United Kingdom for some time and had not had an opportunity of studying closely the treaty, a copy of which had been communicated to His Majesty's Government by the Italian Government, but he had had, whilst in Italy recently, an opportunity of discussing the general situation in the Red Sea with Signor Mussolini, between whose Government and His Majesty's Government most cordial relations existed. Signor Mussolini had promised to study the matter closely, and Sir Austen Chamberlain was of the opinion that the situation would be much clearer after a frank exchange of views between the two Governments.

7. His Highness then asked Sir Austen Chamberlain for the views of His Majesty's Government on the Asir question. This question, owing to a misunderstanding was taken as applying to Syria, and Sir Austen Chamberlain explained to the Emir that it was a very common practice of a discontented minority in any country to seek assistance from persons and Powers outside their own country, more especially if they were in any way united by racial or religious ties. Sir Austen, continuing, stated that if he had said that Great Britain and Italy were on most cordial terms of friendship, this applied more so to France, whose interest His Majesty's Government considered second only to their own, and consequently the Emir's father would be well advised to move with the greatest caution and circumspection in the matter of the Syria troubles. As His Highness was passing through Paris on his way home, Sir Austen Chamberlain advised His Highness to discuss this question with the French authorities.

8. His Highness stated that his father had received many appeals from Syria for assistance, and he was anxious to use his influence to bring about peace in Syria and to that end was prepared to act as mediator between the French and the Druse.

9. Sir Austen replied that that was a question which His Highness had better discuss with the French authorities in Paris, and pointed out that for the Hejaz, as for Great Britain, a protracted period of peace was necessary to allow the country and people to recover from the ravages of war, and advised His Highness to make that the aim and desire of his father's government.

10. Referring to the Asir (Idrisi country), Sir Austen Chamberlain stated that His Majesty's Government had been in treaty relations with the Idrisi for many years and consequently had certain obligations towards that country. His Highness requested to be informed what action His Majesty's Government would take in case the Imam of Yemen advanced into the Idrisi country.

11. Sir Austen stated that he could not give a specific answer to a hypothetical question, but that such an action on the part of the Imam of Yemen would be very serious indeed and a matter to which His Majesty's Government would give their closest attention should such necessity arise.

12. The question of His Majesty's Government sending a representative to the Hejaz to discuss outstanding questions and the revision of the treaty in existence at present was then raised.

13. Sir Austen Chamberlain stated that he was very happy that an exchange of views should take place, and informed His Highness that His Majesty's Government had selected Mr. S. R. Jordan as their representative, in whom His Majesty and His Majesty's Government had full confidence.

14. His Highness thanked Sir Austen Chamberlain and informed him that he was very happy that his great friend Mr. Jordan had been appointed, and he was sure that the appointment would be acceptable to his father, who was anxious to visit Medina, but who was delaying his departure until after the treaty revision.

15. His Highness then asked if Sir Austen Chamberlain could inform him approximately as to what date His Majesty's Government would be ready to proceed with negotiations.

16. Sir Austen Chamberlain replied that it was hoped that Mr. Jordan would carry his instructions with him when he returned to Jeddah with His Highness in the first days of November, but that, if, for any reason, they were not ready by then, they would be forwarded very shortly afterwards.

I am, &c.

LANCELOT OLIPHANT.

Memorandum by Mr. Mallet, respecting Transjordan's Claim to Akaba and Maan.

AT the Moslem Congress at Mecca in July 1926 a resolution was passed (the Egyptian, Afghan and Turkish delegates abstaining) that: "As the Akaba and Maan areas are of the Hejaz territories belonging to the Moslems . . . and as Shereef Ali, son of Shereef Hussein, has agreed with his brother Abdullah to have them separated from the Hejaz and annexed to Transjordania, . . . and as Shereef Ali was not a legal King of the Hejaz . . . and as Transjordania is under a non-Moslem country in a new arrangement called mandate . . . we ask the ruler of the Hejaz to endeavour to reannex Akaba and Maan to the Hejaz by all means and to ask the Moslem world in general to help him."

The treaty negotiations which Mr. Jordan is to open with Ibn Saud in November next will once more focus attention upon the districts of Akaba and Maan. Mr. Jordan is to attempt to obtain Ibn Saud's signature to a protocol defining the boundary of the Hejaz and Transjordan as running from south of Akaba to a point south of Mudawarra on the Hejaz Railway. Ibn Saud may be expected to resist this proposal, in view of the resolution of the Mecca Congress quoted above. In that document it is noteworthy that the Congress assumes that the districts of Maan and Akaba are now part of Transjordan, and does not call upon Ibn Saud to refuse to give them up but to "endeavour to reannex" them. It also assumes that ex-King Ali gave the districts up to his brother Abdullah, whereas Ali never did more than tacitly recognise our declaration that the districts belonged to Transjordan.

The reason given by the Congress for the inclusion of Maan and Akaba in the Hejaz is that they are, and always have been, part of the Moslem Holy Land. This argument can be refuted from history, as will be shown below.

In the year 1886 the Sanjak of Maan (which included Akaba) was detached from the Ottoman Vilayet of Syria and transferred to the Ottoman Vilayet of the Hejaz. In 1894 the Sanjak of Maan was restored to the Vilayet of Syria. By this change the north-east boundary of the Vilayet of Hejaz was made to run from a point on the Gulf of Akaba, 2 miles south of Akaba town to a point on the pilgrim road 2 miles south of Maan, in other words, both Akaba and Maan were administratively excluded from the Hejaz.

The above boundary held good until 1915, when, for military reasons, the Turks found it expedient to push the northern boundary of the Hejaz still further south to the line Wejh-El Ala. It is interesting to note the reason which led the Ottoman authorities to choose this line of demarcation. The Vilayet of the Hejaz was a purely Ottoman administrative sub-division of territory; but there existed at the same time another territorial conception of the Hejaz, sanctioned and accepted by long religious tradition. This other Hejaz was the Holy Land of Islam, the northern confines of which were recognised not only by Arabs and Turks, but by the whole of Islam. Islamic practice held that this boundary ran from the Red Sea coast near Wejh inland to the town of El Ala on the Hejaz Railway. El Ala was, indeed, known to Moslems as the "Northern Gateway" of the Holy Land, and Christians were allowed to travel southward along the Hejaz Railway and pilgrim road as far as that point, but not beyond it. When, therefore, the Ottoman Government in 1915 pushed the confines of the Vilayet of Syria as far south as the line Wejh-El Ala, they deliberately refrained from encroaching beyond the traditional limits of the Holy Land.

Thus the claim of the Mecca Congress that the Holy Land of the Hejaz includes Akaba and Maan is not borne out by history.

The history of the disputed districts since the revolt of Shereef Hussein in 1916 is very complicated. In 1917 King Hussein captured Akaba from the Turks, and his troops remained in effective occupation of the place until 1919. It is true that Lord Allenby's General Headquarters held the view, expressed in a minute by Brigadier-General Clayton, that the "occupation of Akaba by an Arab force is open to various objections . . . it might result in the Arabs claiming that place hereafter. . . . It is essential that Akaba should remain in British hands after the war." But it was thought impolite to emphasise to the leader of the Arab revolt the temporary nature of his occupation of Akaba.

After the armistice the conquered territories were divided by Lord Allenby into various spheres. Akaba was not at the time specifically included by Lord Allenby in the provisional area known as "Occupied Enemy Territory (East)"; Maan may or may not have been intended to fall within that area. On the other

hand, Lord Allenby had, in January 1918, been given by His Majesty's Government supreme authority as far south as the line Ras Fartak-Tebuk, 100 miles south of Akaba, although King Hussein was not told of this. Later, Lord Allenby's headquarters definitely asserted that Akaba had always fallen within "Occupied Enemy Territory (East)," and claimed that "no civil or military appointments there could be recognised unless made by Damascus (i.e., Amir Zeid) with the commander-in-chief's approval."

But even Lord Allenby's claim that he was responsible for Akaba and Maan was apparently not meant to prejudice their future status. Colonel C. E. Wilson, the British Agent at Jeddah, was instructed by His Majesty's High Commissioner at Cairo in January 1919 to explain the above position as regards appointments at Akaba to King Hussein. The telegram to Colonel Wilson continued: "Point out that King's renunciation will be short-lived, since Akaba must very soon cease to be a military base and return to small village."

In conveying this message to King Hussein Colonel Wilson wrote: "The present arrangement . . . is purely temporary, and Akaba must soon cease to be a military base; until then all that is required is for these officials to refer to Damascus for their instructions as they used to do."

Subsequently, the creation of the independent territory of Transjordan under Amir Abdullah after the British evacuation brought up again the question of the ownership of Maan and Akaba. Suggestions were even received from British officials in Palestine that Akaba should become a port of Palestine.

The invitation to the British to return to Transjordan opens a new chapter, in which the determination of His Majesty's Government that Akaba and Maan should belong to Transjordan gradually crystallised into the instructions issued to Colonel Knox before the Koweit Conference in December 1923, that he should attempt to obtain the recognition of both Hussein and Ibn Saud to the proposal that the Hejaz-Transjordan boundary should run from the point of intersection of meridian 38° with parallel 29° 35' (due west of the Nefud salient) to a point on the Hejaz Railway in the neighbourhood of Mudawarra, and thence to a point on the Gulf of Akaba south of Akaba town.

The question of Maan and Akaba was thus, in fact, left over after the war for friendly arrangement with King Hussein, but it was certainly the intention of His Majesty's Government to induce him to give way to them. The King's obstinate character, however, made such agreement impossible, and to the very end of his reign he refused to yield, probably remembering Colonel Wilson's remarks in January 1919 about the temporary character of the British occupation.

The attempt made by His Majesty's Government at the Koweit Conference to induce Hussein to give up all claims to Akaba and to the territory north of Mudawarra in exchange for the rendition by Ibn Saud of Khurma and Turaba, failed owing to Hussein's refusal to send a delegate to the conference.

Into the detailed merits of the past history of the case we need go no further, as the situation changed completely with the conquest of the Hejaz by Ibn Saud.

Hitherto the question of Maan and Akaba had been one for negotiation of a friendly kind with King Hussein. We had hoped eventually to obtain his willing concurrence in the annexation of those districts by his son Abdullah on behalf of Transjordan. Anyhow, Transjordan must have access to the Gulf of Akaba, but there was, even as late as October 1924, a distinct possibility that Akaba town might be left to the Hejaz. In that month the officer administering the Government of Palestine, in telegraphing to the Colonial Office, expressed doubt whether His Majesty's Government would consider justifiable the inclusion in Transjordan of Akaba, "which has always been admitted as in the Hejaz." Moreover, King Hussein was an old man and, if we exercised patience, we might find his successor easier to deal with.

But the advance of the Wahabis put an end to this policy of patience. Their troops were already over-running the Wadi Sirhan, and it became necessary to consider the defence of Transjordan and Palestine from this menace from the desert. The strategic frontier required for this purpose must include Maan and Akaba.

A message was therefore sent to Ibn Saud informing him where the frontier lay, beyond which his Wahabis must not pass. This message was contained in a telegram sent on the 15th October, 1924, by the Colonial Office to the Resident in the Persian Gulf, and ran as follows:—

"His Majesty's Government think it necessary to inform the Sultan that they will regard unprovoked aggression within the boundary defined in Colonial

Office telegram to Colonel Knox of the 8th November, 1923" (details of which are quoted above), "as an attack upon territory for which they are responsible, and that they will continue, as in the past, to reserve to themselves full liberty of action to deal with such aggression in the manner they think best."

This message was conveyed to Ibn Saud in a letter from the Political Agent at Bahrein, dated the 21st October, 1924.

Throughout the winter of 1924-25 King Hussein, having fled from Jeddah, lay in his yacht off Akaba, and in spite of British protests, carried on continual intrigues with Emir Abdullah against the invading Wahabis. The provocation eventually became so great that, in spite of His Majesty's Government's warning of October 1924, Ibn Saud decided to despatch a force against Akaba in May 1925.

This threat caused His Majesty's Government to issue two ultimatums (1) to King Hussein, ordering him to leave Akaba at once, on the ground that by his activities there he was involving His Majesty's Government, the mandatory for Transjordan, in a breach of neutrality, and (2) to Ibn Saud, reminding him that Akaba lay within the boundary notified to him in October 1924. "Any unprovoked aggression on your Highness's part," the warning ran, "would be regarded as an attack upon territory for which His Majesty's Government are responsible. His Majesty's Government cannot allow Akhwan forces to violate the frontier laid down, and if an Akhwan force attempts to enter Akaba, His Majesty's Government will inevitably be compelled to take such steps as are necessary to prevent or eject them. . . . His Majesty's Government are taking steps to establish the authority of the Transjordan administration in the whole area within the boundary communicated to you in October last."

The threatened attack on Akaba never materialised. Ex-King Hussein was removed in one of His Majesty's ships to Cyprus; Ibn Saud called off his troops. He acknowledged the British Government's communication by a statement that he had "noted its contents." He also asked for further information about Maan. Mr. Jordan answered this query on the 12th August, 1925, by reminding His Highness of the communication of the 21st October, 1924, "which states that the boundary crosses the railway in the neighbourhood of Mudawarra."

In reply Ibn Saud wrote to Mr. Jordan: "As for fixing up the frontiers, this will be the subject of discussion with the Government's delegate" (i.e., Sir G. Clayton).

Sir G. Clayton told his Highness on the 11th October, 1925, at his first formal meeting with Ibn Saud before the Bahra negotiations, that, while it was no part of his mission to discuss the Transjordan-Hejaz frontier with him, he was empowered to inform him that His Majesty's Government had decided that the line should eventually be drawn from a point on the Gulf on Akaba situated at some distance south of the town of Akaba, through a point on the Hejaz Railway south of the station of Mudawarra, to a point situated approximately at the intersection of meridian 38° E. with parallel 29° 35' N. He added that His Majesty's Government fixed this last point as that at which the eastern frontier of Transjordan should end, and that they could not consent to any encroachment beyond the line which they had already proposed in regard to the southern portion of that section of the frontier.

The question thereafter lay dormant until it was raised by Ibn Saud's delegate as a side-issue at the International Sanitary Conference at Paris in June 1926. Mr. Jordan, acting under instructions, asked Ibn Saud to instruct his delegate not to reopen this question, "regarding which Sir G. Clayton communicated the decision of His Majesty's Government to your Majesty some nine months ago." Ibn Saud thereupon ordered his delegate not to interfere in matters which did not concern him, but, in informing Mr. Jordan of this decision, added the significant sentence: "No negotiations at all have been made between us and Sir G. Clayton regarding Akaba and Maan."

To sum up, Transjordan's claim to the ownership of Akaba and Maan as against the claim of King Hussein was never entirely established. The question was deliberately left over during the war for negotiations afterwards, and these negotiations never achieved finality. But we have never in any way admitted to Ibn Saud that he, as successor by conquest to the Kingdom of the Hejaz, was entitled to include Akaba and Maan in his kingdom. On the contrary, in all our dealings with Ibn Saud we have adopted the consistent attitude that the boundary between the Hejaz and Transjordan runs south of Akaba and Mudawarra. Ibn Saud has never categorically agreed to this boundary, but he has tacitly acquiesced in our

contention. The disputed area is not historically part of the Holy Land of Islam, and any claims which King Hussein may have had to it were personal, and due to his occupation of the district as our ally during the Great War. Whatever obligations we may therefore have been under to King Hussein have been liquidated by the fall of his dynasty, and we are under no obligation whatever to Ibn Saud in regard to Akaba and Maan, which cannot in any circumstances be ceded by Transjordan to the Hejaz.

Foreign Office, October 22, 1926.

[E 6014/3158/91]

No. 46.

Acting Consul Mayers to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received October 26.)

(No. 115. Confidential.)

Jeddah, September 30, 1926.

Sir,
WITH reference to paragraph 1 of despatch No. 242 to you from His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, dated Angora, 18th May last, I have the honour to report that Suleiman Shevket Bey has now arrived in the Hejaz.

2. Shevket Bey reached Jeddah by the same Khedivial steamship which brought back the Emir Saud from Egypt a few days ago. He is a man about 50, with a rather solemn mien which may cloak only very moderate talents. It is reported that he was formerly Turkish consul-general at Tabriz.

3. As Shevket Bey has not yet called or otherwise made his presence officially known, it has been impossible to ascertain his exact diplomatic status. He is said to have the rank of Minister, but I have no confirmation of this.

4. Shevket Bey spent a considerable time in Egypt on his way to the Hejaz. I understand that he will establish himself in Jeddah rather than in Mecca, which arrangement, in view of his already having made enquiries regarding facilities for obtaining whisky here, would not be surprising.

5. Mahmud Nadim Bey, formerly Turkish Vali in the Yemen, and a more mercurial personality than the head of the mission, is to second Shevket Bey in his task. Nadim Bey, who will be remembered as the emissary sent by the Imam Yehya of the Yemen to secure the liberation of Colonel Jacob and his party in 1919, has already been in Jeddah in an unofficial capacity for some time.

6. The Turkish mission has already shown a tendency to knit intimate relations with the Soviet consulate-general, whose weakening influence in the Hejaz is felt to have been temporarily strengthened by Shevket Bey's arrival.

7. I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's High Commissioner in Egypt and His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople.

I have, &c.

NORMAN MAYERS.

[E 6016/367/91]

No. 47.

Acting Consul Mayers to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received October 26.)

(No. 117. Secret.)

Jeddah, October 3, 1926.

Sir,
I HAVE the honour to forward herewith my report on the situation in the Hejaz during the period the 1st-30th September, 1926.

Copies of this report are being sent to Egypt, Jerusalem (two), Bagdad, Aden, Simla, Beirut (for Damascus), Khartum (through Port Sudan) and Singapore.

I have, &c.

NORMAN MAYERS.

Jeddah Report for the Period September 1-30, 1926.

TOWARDS the end of September, Ibn Saud paid a short visit to Jeddah. The visit had been pending for some time, as it was known that His Majesty intended making a tour to Medina, taking Jeddah on his way. However, the presence in Mecca of his father, the Imam Abd-er-Rahman, detained him. But when this old man, now heavy with years and much repose, had made his prescribed circumambulation of the Ka'aba in an improvised bathchair, and gone off by slow stages to Riyadh in one of his son's motor-cars, accompanied by baggage, camels and an escort, Ibn Saud was free to travel.

2. It was not, however, a tour to Medina which brought Ibn Saud to Jeddah, such visit having been momentarily postponed, but the return of the King's eldest son, the Emir Saud, from Egypt. Early on the morning of the 25th a salute of guns announced the King's arrival from Mecca, and a few hours later another salvo greeted the disembarkation of the heir-apparent.

3. The latter young man, whose appearance and address set one thinking of the ephemeral nature of Oriental dynasties, appeared delighted with his stay in Egypt—almost too delighted. I hear that he distributed a princely largesse on the crew of the "Khedivial" steamship which brought him from Suez, but also that he made a somewhat unprincely dash, and one likely to awake comment on his Bedouin uncouthness among the more urbane inhabitants of Jeddah, through the triumphal arches erected for him and the school-children awaiting him with banners and prepared speeches.

4. At a banquet given the same night the Emir Saud was entirely in the shade—indeed, it was almost impossible to find the guest of the evening. Such effacement was no doubt attributable to the respect due from a son in the presence of his sire, but it emphasised the degree to which Ibn Saud overshadows his apparent successor to a throne round which, one-man-show as it is, the storms of many rivalries will some day beat.

5. It has been reported in the Egyptian newspaper, the "Moqqattam," that during Saud's stay in Egypt the French gave him an unofficial invitation to visit the Lebanon, hoping by those means to lighten the pressure of Arab antipathy which the Syrian situation has fostered. Saud is reported as refusing the invitation on the ground that he did not wish to hurt the feelings of his own people, nor those of the Syrians, by accepting such hospitality. The Mecca official organ, the "Umm-el-Kura," reproduces this article, and remarks: "We have no knowledge of any such invitation."

6. The King's second son, the Emir Feisal, and Dr. Abdullah Bey Damluji, Minister for Foreign Affairs, accompanied by Mr. Jordan, acting agent at Jeddah, left the Hejaz on the 8th September for Great Britain, Holland and France. Sheikh Yussef Yasin, so-called Director of the Press and Intelligence Department, and editor of the "Umm-el-Kura" newspaper, a Syrian of Lattakia origin, is acting as Foreign Minister during Damluji's absence.

7. This visit, which as far as Great Britain is concerned is a private one, is avowedly intended as a step towards asserting the position of Nejd and the Hejaz as a nation among the nations. Ibn Saud sends his son to bear his thanks to the heads of the States which have recognised his sovereignty, and hopes at the same time to cement friendly relations with three of the great Moslem Powers from whose colonies and empires the pilgrims of the future will come. By the Islamic Congress early in the year the King, as Guardian of the Holy Places, plainly marked his spiritual influence, although he was too wise to press the point too far. By visits such as the present one he hopes gradually to affirm his temporal power.

8. Ibn Saud is, in fact, keenly desirous on general recognition of his sovereignty. He is at present seeking official Italian recognition with a certain insistence, and when the first news of the recent attempted assassination of Signor Mussolini reached him, made a great point of special telegrams of enquiry and congratulation being sent in his name to Rome.

9. It was rumoured, though I discredit the report, that Turkish official recognition was brought to Ibn Saud by the new Turkish representative, who arrived in Jeddah by the boat on which the Emir Saud was also a passenger. This is Suleiman Shevket Bey, whose mission in the Hejaz may prove as interesting as that of our Russian colleague, if in some ways dissimilar. Shevket Bey has not yet started

to pay his official calls. In spite of that, a spontaneous acquaintance has rapidly developed between him and the Soviet consul-general, the spontaneity being apparently of Russian origin.

10. Can there be any sympathy of purpose or attitude between the Russian and the Turkish representatives in the Hejaz? In a recent Bagdad Intelligence Report an Iraqi politician is reported to have written, after talking with "leading Islamic politicians" in Egypt, that he "found everywhere a growing desire for a united Islamic front. Turkey was the source of the new inspiration, and Ibn Saud and the Imam Yahya of the Yemen were sympathetic." Russia would naturally be interested in such an excellent weapon of anti-European propaganda as a united Islamic front, and perhaps Shevket Bey has been instructed to be interested in the same ideal. He is a middle-aged man, who wears a dinner-jacket, is far too enlightened to have much in common with your Wahabi mediaevalisms, and has been making enquiries as to the best method of securing a regular supply of whisky from over the water.

11. His second-in-command is a less formal and more interesting figure than his chief. He is Mahmud Nadim Bey, Vali of the Yemen in Turkish days, a small, rotund and jolly man, who also openly professes devotion to the best-known produce of Scotland. He will be remembered as the official who was deputed by the Imam Yahya (Colonel Jacob's book is my informant) to go to Bazil when Colonel H. F. Jacob was detained there, along with his mission to the Imam, in 1919; indeed, he boasts that he was instrumental in obtaining Colonel Jacob's release. He speaks Arabic well and is obviously well versed in Arabian affairs. Nadim Bey has already been here for some considerable time awaiting the arrival of Shevket Bey, who on his way has spent some months in Egypt.

12. Before the latter's advent, the prestige of the Soviet mission was on the wane, a tendency exemplified by its reduction from a diplomatic agency to a consulate-general. M. Khakimoff may possibly find his influence buttressed by the new Turkish arrivals; but it remains to be seen whether the two work in amicable conjunction.

13. Ibn Saud wrote on the 18th September showing some impatience at the small measure of success which his representative had achieved in his parleys at Amman with the Transjordan authorities regarding Nejd claims for recent robberies in the frontier zone. Abdul Aziz-bin-Zeid having already been almost three months in Transjordan, the King ordered him to proceed to Palestine to get satisfaction there. In informing the King that I had passed this information on to the proper authorities, I reminded him that time and patience were always necessary in getting to the bottom of such claims.

14. Ibn Saud's neighbours to the south are the subject of a considerable amount of speculation. It is generally known that the Italians are supplying the Imam Yahya of the Yemen with arms, and the outlook for the Idrisi is not of the brightest, but conjecture regarding Ibn Saud's attitude to both is extremely diversified.

15. Sayed Ali, the deposed Idrisi, has been for some time now in Mecca, but it does not follow that he has been able to induce the King to render him active assistance. At the end of September another member of the family, Sheikh Murgani-el-Idrisi, arrived in Jeddah by dhow from Qunfuda, was hospitably treated, and passed also on his way to Mecca. He arrived from Asir, and may have been sent, as rumour has it, to make representations to Ibn Saud on behalf of Sayed Hassan, the ruling Idrisi. The King may receive these exiles as guests, and go no further; or in time he may be influenced by their appeals; or, again, he may keep them near him and await developments. However that may be, I am inclined to think that Ibn Saud is not urgently concerned for his southern frontier if he is contemplating a tour to Medina, as he says he is, in the immediate future. He must by the nature of things be deeply interested in the fate of Asir. It is possible that he has already come to an understanding with the Imam for the partition of what remains of the Idrisi's territories, as suggested in the Jeddah report for August; alternatively, he may allow the Imam to take Sabia and Jizan. His attitude to these questions is still very obscure.

16. It has been reported to me that the King has sent three machine guns, two cannon, eighteen camel-loads of ammunition and a small number of artillerymen to Ebha to reinforce his garrison there. This reinforcement is not of a very decisive nature, and not large enough to point to offensive action.

17. The official "Umm-el-Kura" has gleefully published an extract from the "Moslem Outlook," which takes the Ali brothers to task for their criticisms of Ibn Saud's administration of the Hejaz, where the good sword of Ibn Saud, it goes on to

say, has cut away difficulties which all the Caliphate societies in the world would have failed to solve.

18. A new, and perhaps definitive, account of the settlement between Ibn Saud and the rebellious Bani Malik tribes is now available. Relations between these tribes and the King came to a head when Ibn Saud's envoys were murdered. Before, however, sending a final expedition to deal with the offenders, the King decided to call together at Taif a council of the leading sheikhs of the southern tribesmen, all of whom would, according to the system in vogue, be obliged to contribute men to the punitive force organised by the King against the Beni Malik. The council sat for a week at Taif enjoying the Royal hospitality. Beni Malik representatives were present, and these finally signified their willingness to accept a legal decision. The case was then put up to the Sharia Court, which decided that the murderers were to be handed over, executed on the spot on which the crime took place and buried alongside their victims. The King approved the finding and ordered it to be carried out, while the chiefs dispersed to their homes—a solution pleasing in its simplicity and reminiscent of a Saxon king dealing out rough justice to his earls.

19. A military matter which has aroused interest is the decision of Ibn Saud to disband the Wahabi troops he has up to the present kept in the Hejaz and to organise a force of 5,000 Hejazis who will be stationed in Mecca, Medina and other military posts. The new troops at Mecca are now said to be 2,000 strong and to have passed under the King's window crying: "There is no God but Allah!" which, among other things, is the motto inscribed in white on the green Hejaz flag.

20. Ibn Saud's Wahabi troops from Nejd were warlike and cheap, ready to give their lives for a guinea or a glimpse of paradise. It does seem somewhat remarkable that, as the upkeep and salaries of the new troops cannot be less than £3 a month, the King is willing to spend £180,000 a year on the new cadres, especially as the fresh material is poor from the point of view of *moral*. It was one of the virtues of Ibn Saud's régime that he spent little on his army in the Hejaz, and relied in the towns on police and the respect due to his own good name to keep the peace. Does Ibn Saud wish to please the Hejaz, and avoid the possibility of friction, by sending his fanatical followers back to their Nejdian oases? Or has he some ulterior purpose to which he will in due course put the crude impetuosity of his own followers or the hardly less crude, but better equipped, force of the Hejaz army?

21. The interior is said to be calm. The Emir Mohammed, the King's brother, is reported to have been given greater powers in his Government at Riyadh, where he has returned satisfied in the company of his father, and where he will enjoy a large measure of independence. Shereef Khalid is described as kicking his heels disappointedly in his Government of Turaba, but to be quiet.

22. New measures for the internal regulation of the Hejaz are constantly appearing, and an attempt is obviously being made to improve conditions.

23. Sheikh Kamel-el-Kassab, a Damascene Syrian from Haifa, I believe, has drawn up an educational programme for the Hejaz which, on paper, included twenty free infant and primary schools at Mecca, Jeddah, Taif, Wejh and Yambo. An official apologia for spending public money on education states that it is hoped to make the pupils good Moslems and firm believers, capable of serving their country by knowledge rather than by ignorance. An elementary school under the scheme is already open at Jeddah. It was there, in fact, in Turkish and Hashemite times, and was reopened by Ibn Saud after a few honest doubts. Writing, reading, the Koran and traditions and elementary arithmetic are taught, and the highest class are even given three lessons a week in English, which pupils, especially those of the merchant class, are anxious to learn. It is proposed also to teach a little geography, but the suggestion to impart such a dangerous and subversive science may not come to anything.

24. A number of intricate regulations have also been published for automobile traffic on the Jeddah-Mecca road—a traffic open to the Moslem public since the withdrawal of the monopoly concession. The regulations affect licences, number plates, rates, road-tax, the removal of broken-down cars, chauffeurs' permits, number of passengers, speed limit, lights, fines and penalties, the necessity of keeping to the right and of pulling up when the King passes. The legal fare between Jeddah and Mecca is £1 for adults and half that amount for children. There is some talk in Jeddah of an enterprise by which steamship companies can issue through-tickets by steamer and car to Mecca.

25. All doctors, chemists and dentists are to obtain permits to practise from the Department of Public Health.

26. Hassan Bey Wefqi, a Syrian, Director of Public Security, has been deputed to go to Berne to negotiate the entry of the Hejaz into the International Postal Union. A somewhat amusing article in the "Umm-el-Kura" published in this connection suggests that it is not below the dignity of the Hejaz to join the comity of nations in the matter of posts, as the system was invented by an Oriental, Cyrus, the last of the Persian kings, in his war with the Greeks.

27. A supply of new stamps is being printed. I am unable to state as yet whether, with an eye on the commercial value to philatelists, they are to be of new design.

28. There have been signs that the question of nationality in the Hejaz has been exercising the minds of the King and his advisers. The problem presents many special difficulties. In the Hejaz the number of foreigners, as is only to be expected in a State whose principal *raison d'être* is the pilgrimage, is very considerable. To King Hussein is attributed the remark that, if each foreign Power were to claim its nationals in Mecca, the only subjects left to him would be the dogs of one quarter and the Bedu of another. The jest is true in the sense that a great number of Meccans are of foreign descent, extracted from the four corners of the Moslem world. Again, the number of foreigners in the Hejaz for trade or in the Government service is important. It is obviously difficult for the Administration to do without the latter's services, but a Government which has to depend on alien servants is in an equivocal position.

29. However, a beginning has been made to cut away some of these entanglements. According to a recent order, holders of public office and employees of Governments departments must be subjects of Ibn Saud. Foreign subjects whose services are judged indispensable will be employed on contract for a fixed term and under special conditions. As a result of this law, a number of foreign employees in the Customs at Jeddah have been given the choice of adopting Hejaz nationality or of relinquishing their posts. This involved three Indians and a Sudanese, who all appealed to this agency for advice. They were told that the matter was one for their private conscience; their adoption of local nationality would amount to naturalisation in the Hejaz, by which they would abandon consular protection, a step which anyone living abroad is free to take. The Sudanese said he would stick to his job. The three Indians preferred to retain their nationality and have resigned. Similarly, two Indians employed as engineers on the condenser have been asked to sign a contract to the effect that, while servants of the Hejaz Government, they will refer their complaints to that Government alone.

30. Whether these regulations will be enforced against the higher functionaries remains to be seen. Some of them have, no doubt, their main interest here, and will feel no loss on becoming Hejazis. Others will possibly console themselves with the thought that, even if they adopt local nationality temporarily, no formal renunciation of original nationality is required, and they may find means later on when they leave the country of concealing their apostasy.

31. The preoccupation of the Hejaz Government with this question of nationality is evidenced in another direction by a case which occurred recently in Jeddah. A local merchant, bearer of an Egyptian passport regularly obtained through the Egyptian consulate in Jeddah after consideration by the Ministry of the Interior in Cairo, was refused permission to leave the country on the grounds that he was in reality a Hejaz subject, having been born in the Hejaz. The Egyptian consul took up the case vigorously with the King, and finally obtained that the person in question should be allowed to leave, pending a reference to Egypt of the difficulty. What is to be the national status of an Egyptian, Indian or African by extraction born in the Hejaz?

32. The more persons who succeed in obtaining passports from the various consulates established in Jeddah, the less subjects will the King of the Hejaz be able to claim and the greater will be the chance of foreign consular intervention. This consideration will doubtless impress on the King and his advisers, to whom the importance of increasing the numbers of acknowledged Hejaz subjects is much greater politically than is the importance of their corresponding loss to the Powers concerned, the urgency of arriving at a definite ruling regarding nationality. On the other hand, the economic prosperity of the Hejaz depends on an uninterrupted sequence of profitable pilgrimages and on the steady influx of such pious Moslems as, provided with the means to live, come to reside near the holy places. With the latter consideration in mind, the King would be well advised to approach the nationality problem with care, and then only after having heard the views and advice

of the foreign Administrations who will be affected. His abrupt saddling of Hejaz nationality on men of Indian or Egyptian tradition may give a long-sought opportunity of misrepresentation to his critics in India and Egypt.

33. The religious situation appears stationary. Ibn Saud's puritanical views have had a decided influence even in Jeddah, which is quieter than many towns in the East, although the whinings of gramophones reproducing the meretricious cadences of some Cairene or Beirut prima donna are often heard on the night air, except when the King is in Jeddah. Hubble-bubbles are rare, at least in public, and such cafés as there are in the bazaar are poorly patronised. I hear that new regulations are to be suggested to the King which will forbid extensive hospitality at circumcisions, marriages and funerals, perhaps to the relief of the poor.

34. A fresh committee has been formed at Mecca, of which the head is a certain Abdullah-el-Sheibi, son of the Keeper of the Key of the Ka'aba, to supervise morals, encourage collective prayers, control muezzins and imams, and generally call the attention of the authorities to infractions of the Sharia law. No one will grumble at a proper and rigorous control of muezzins, and the committee may not be so dangerously austere as it sounds. Recently a Mecca zealot, in collusion with a police official, falsely accused a neighbour of secret drinking. The accusation, as well as the accuser's claim to being an official spy, being proved incorrect in court, sentence of a year's imprisonment was passed on the meddler, and it was decreed that the finding should be made as public as possible.

35. At the same time, there is considerable effervescence in Mecca when the inquisitors make enquiries concerning the paucity of shopkeepers, either in their shops or at the mosque at the hour of prayer, or when prayers have to be prayed behind a Wahabi imam. The puritan and conformist leaven is working. There were practically no exceptions when, at the banquet given at Jeddah for the return of the Emir Saud, the call to evening prayer sounded and the Moslems present formed up in line for their devotions. Several backs bent then which are little wont to indulge in the exercise, and many rose from their knees with an embarrassed air. The only Moslems present who did not join in were the Turkish and Egyptian representatives.

36. Replying to the enquiries of an Indian newspaper, the "Zemindar," Ibn Saud has telegraphed that the Prophet's Tomb at Medina and the "Green Dome" built over it are intact, and that they will come to no harm while he has sons and life to defend them. He adds that the tombs of the Saints are also safe. There is some casuistry in this assertion. The superstructures of the tombs of the Saints have been destroyed; the tombs themselves have not been violated. As for the Green Dome over the Prophet's Tomb, it has escaped destruction because of the outcry raised for its preservation. Ibn Saud justifies his special action in this respect by arguing that he was not called upon to destroy the Dome, as it embodies in its masonry the Prophet's own house, and is not, therefore, technically a superstructure idolatrously erected over a grave.

37. It has been brought to my notice that during September a notable of Jeddah who is in the King's confidence has remitted the sum of £25,000 to Nasr-el-Turki, a resident of Jeddah and a friend of the King, who is now in Egypt. The transaction may be a private one, but, from what I understand, it is more likely to be a governmental remittance, and is perhaps not unconnected with the absence of Khalid Bey Hakim, who is thought to be buying supplies and arms in Europe, possibly in Italy.

38. During September the Agency has repatriated 472 indigent Indians, 638 Nigerians and 15 Sudanis. It is announced that in future the 70 Egyptian piastres required as health and quarantine dues from every pilgrim or traveller landing in the Hejaz will be payable in English gold only.

39. Five slaves have been repatriated during the period under review.

NORMAN MAYERS.

[E 5988/572/91]

No. 48.

Acting Consul Mayers to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received October 25.)

(No. 120.)

Sir,

Jeddah, October 9, 1926.

I HAVE the honour to report that on receipt of your telegram No. 63 of the 29th September last regarding the attempt by the Governor of Tebuk to occupy the fort at Mudawwara in Transjordan territory, I addressed to Ibn Saud the letter, copy of which is enclosed.

2. His Majesty has now replied in a letter, No. 126, dated 25.3.45 (2nd October, 1926), in the following terms:—

"We have received your letter No. 614 of the 1st October, 1926, informing us of the attempt of the Governor of Tebuk to occupy the fort at Mudawwara. I should be glad if you would assure His Majesty's Government that such a report has no foundation. However, as a further precaution, we have instructed the Government of Tebuk in writing to do their utmost to maintain peace in that region, and to redouble their efforts for the prevalence of peace in those parts."

3. I am forwarding a copy of this despatch to His Majesty's High Commissioner for Palestine, with reference to his telegram No. 235 to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, repeated to Jeddah under No. 226/M.

I have, &c.

NORMAN MAYERS.

Enclosure in No. 48.

Acting Consul Mayers to His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd.

(After respects.)

Jeddah, October 1, 1926.

I AM directed by His Majesty's Government to inform your Majesty that they have learned from His Britannic Majesty's High Commissioner for Palestine of the attempt recently made by the Governor of Tebuk to occupy the fort at Mudawwara in Transjordan territory.

I hasten to inform your Majesty that His Majesty's Government have no doubt but that this attack was delivered without the knowledge of your Majesty, and that the blame for it lies solely with the local authorities in that area. His Majesty's Government trust that your Majesty will give strict orders to avoid any recurrence of such incidents.

Greetings.

NORMAN MAYERS.

[E 5657/2660/91]

No. 49.

Sir Austen Chamberlain to Sir R. Graham (Rome).

(No. 1459. Confidential.)

Foreign Office, October 25, 1926.

Sir, WITH reference to my despatch No. 1257 of the 13th September, relative to the Imam-Idrisi conflict in Arabia, and its reaction on British and Italian interests in the Red Sea, I transmit to your Excellency the accompanying copy of a memorandum from the Italian Embassy, suggesting that advantage should be taken of the presence in Rome of the Governor of Eritrea for conversations to take place between you and the Italian Government, and that technical delegates should be sent to Rome to assist you in these conversations.

2. I request you to inform M. Mussolini in the most friendly manner that I welcome his promises of collaboration, and share his view that conversations might usefully take place in Rome in the near future. His Majesty's Government are, however, anxious that you should be in a position to deal fully and frankly with the various questions concerning the Red Sea which are of mutual interest to our two countries, and with that object they have instructed the competent departments to furnish them with a comprehensive report on the whole question. On receipt thereof His Majesty's Government will be in a position to authorise you to open conversations with the Italian Government, and experts will be sent from here to assist you.

3. You should explain to M. Mussolini in suitable terms how greatly I regret the inconvenience which I fear is being caused to the Italian Government, and particularly to M. Gasparini, by the inevitable delay in the departure for Rome of the British experts; but the Imperial Conference, which is meeting twice a day, requires the presence of the Ministers in charge of nearly all the departments interested. I will, however, do my utmost to expedite the matter.

I am, &c.

AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN.

• No. 38.

Foreign Office to Acting Consul Jordan (Jeddah).

(No. 126.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, November 3, 1926.

AS you are aware, His Majesty's Government have decided to accede to the request which His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd made, in the course of his discussions with Sir G. Clayton during the latter's mission to negotiate settlements of certain outstanding questions concerning Iraq and Transjordan, to the effect that the treaty concluded with him in 1916 should be revised. The King of the Hejaz was informed in April last that His Majesty's Government would be prepared to discuss the question of the revision of the treaty with him at an early date.

2. His Majesty's Government have given careful consideration to this question, and I am directed by Secretary Sir Austen Chamberlain to transmit to you the enclosed draft of a revised treaty which will indicate to you the matters with which they consider the treaty might deal.

3. His Majesty's Government do not wish to bind you to the precise terms of this draft, or, as is explained below, in certain matters to insist upon its provisions to the jeopardy of the whole of the negotiations; but, seeing that Ibn Saud has for some months held himself in readiness for the opening of the negotiations, you may think it desirable to place the draft, either in whole or in part, before him, without any detailed preliminary conversations, as representing His Majesty's Government's views as to the form which the new treaty should take.

4. His Majesty's Government are, however, content to leave you to decide the exact procedure to be adopted. The following information regarding the policy of His Majesty's Government towards the questions dealt with in the various articles of the draft treaty, and towards such other questions as may be raised during your conversations with Ibn Saud, is communicated to you for your guidance in the negotiations.

5. In general, His Majesty's Government consider that the treaty should include as little detail as possible, and they would prefer not to protract the negotiations unduly by the discussion of disputed questions; since such questions may be settled more readily when a new treaty has been concluded.

6. In regard to the terms of the draft treaty which accompanies this despatch, His Majesty's Government wish, if possible, to retain the provision in the second sentence of article 1 whereby each of the high contracting parties undertakes to prevent the use of his territory as a base for activities directed against the other; but you may, in the last resort, agree to the omission of this sentence if its inclusion should be strongly opposed by Ibn Saud, and if, in your opinion, his opposition is unlikely to be overcome.

7. As regards article 3, I am to explain that the Government of India attach great importance to the inclusion in the treaty of some provision which would safeguard Indian Moslems during the pilgrimage, since great indignation has been aroused in India by the intolerance exhibited by the Wahabis during the recent pilgrimage. His Majesty's Government have no desire to depart from their declared policy of non-interference in religious matters; and they have decided not to adopt a suggestion made by the Government of India that the article should be amplified by inserting a provision to secure that British pilgrims should enjoy freedom of religious observance and rites. At the same time, they feel that, in deference to Indian opinion, it is important that the treaty should include some provision on the lines of the draft article, even though it may secure little more than is secured by the ordinary international sanctions.

8. Article 6 repeats the provision of article 6 of the treaty of 1916, save that no reference is made to the question of determining the limits of the territories mentioned. His Majesty's Government have given careful consideration to the question whether Ibn Saud should be invited to agree to refrain from aggression on the rulers of the Persian Gulf coast. It appeared to them doubtful whether, in practice, such an engagement would effectively deter Ibn Saud if he were determined to absorb some petty neighbouring Arab State. Moreover, His Majesty's Government did not wish to commit themselves to recognise the extent of Ibn Saud's domains or to protect territories outside those domains, but would have preferred to remain free to take what action they considered necessary in each particular case, having regard to the precise nature of their

relations with the principality concerned and to other relevant circumstances. As you will observe, however, from the enclosed copy of a despatch addressed to the Secretary of State for the Colonies by the Resident in the Persian Gulf, certain instances of interference in the affairs of the principalities of the Persian Gulf coast on the part of the Amir of Hasa, whether with or without the knowledge and approval of Ibn Saud, have recently occurred. His Majesty's Government therefore came to the conclusion that if Ibn Saud were not asked to reassume the obligation imposed upon him by article 6 of the treaty of 1916, he might infer that they would not oppose any interference by him with the integrity of the rulers in question, and would thus be encouraged to extend his influence in South-East Arabia. His Majesty's Government have decided that representations should be made to Ibn Saud on the subject of the activities of the Amir of Hasa, with which, indeed, as he has now been in the Hejaz for the past two years, he may be little acquainted. I enclose a copy of a letter from the India Office to the Colonial Office which shows to which of the actions of the Amir exception could rightly be taken. If you consider that it would be desirable to obtain some indication as to the utility or otherwise of including the proposed provisions, or as to Ibn Saud's probable attitude towards a proposal to include it, you may make representations on the subject of the Amir's activities to Ibn Saud before approaching him on the general question. If, however, Ibn Saud should finally prove unwilling to agree to reassume the obligations in the new treaty, you should inform him that His Majesty's Government hold themselves free to take what action they consider necessary in particular cases.

9. His Majesty's Government understand that Ibn Saud will probably be reluctant to agree to the inclusion of the provision in article 7 for the recognition of the right of manumission of His Britannic Majesty's consular officers in his domains. His Majesty's Government attach great importance to this provision, however, and you should not, in any circumstances, agree to modify this article without reference to the Secretary of State.

10. It has been decided not to include in the treaty an article defining the extra-territorial rights which His Majesty's Government desire to claim in the Hejaz. It appears unlikely, in the first place, that Ibn Saud would accept such an article. Moreover, His Majesty's Government are advised that the omission would not materially prejudice any claims which they may be in a position to make that the Capitulations are still in existence. So long as the present system continues whereby you, as His Majesty's consul, arrange that proceedings against British subjects are stayed until you have had time to investigate the matter, it seems essential that you should have some legal power to deal with such cases should it become necessary for you to do so. Such Power can only be derived from the Ottoman Order in Council, 1924, and you will no doubt realise that, if you have occasion to deal with such a case in a judicial capacity, you can only do so in accordance with the terms of the Order in Council.

11. The possibility of Ibn Saud reopening the question of the payment of a subsidy to which he referred in his conversations with Sir G. Clayton must be envisaged. His Majesty's Government could not agree to such a request. If Ibn Saud presses for the payment of a subsidy, you will point out to him that it would be liable to be misrepresented as an attempt on the part of His Majesty's Government to obtain undue control over the Holy Places, and that his acceptance of a subsidy from a non-Moslem Power would greatly damage his prestige with Moslem opinion throughout the world.

12. There is one further matter with which His Majesty's Government wish to deal at the same time, *i.e.*, the fixation of the frontier between the Hejaz and Transjordan. It would be inappropriate to introduce provisions on this subject into the general treaty of amity now contemplated. A separate protocol has been drafted, a copy of which is enclosed, in which the frontier, as defined by Sir G. Clayton (see p. 16 of his report), is set out. You should endeavour to obtain Ibn Saud's assent to the draft protocol as well as to the main treaty. His Majesty's Government are not prepared to agree to any modification of the frontier and you will in no circumstances assent to any alteration of the draft protocol.

I am, &c.

LANCELOT OLIPHANT.

Enclosure 1 in No. 50.

Revised Draft Treaty.

HIS Majesty the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and of the British Dominions beyond the Seas, Emperor of India, and His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd and its Dependencies, being desirous of confirming and strengthening the friendly relations which exist between them, and of consolidating their respective interests, have resolved to conclude a treaty of friendship and good understanding, for which purpose His Britannic Majesty has appointed as his plenipotentiary his trusty and well-beloved Stanley Rupert Jordan, Esquire, acting British agent and consul at Jeddah.

His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd and its Dependencies, and the said Mr. Stanley Rupert Jordan, His Britannic Majesty's plenipotentiary, have accordingly now agreed upon and concluded the following articles:—

ARTICLE 1.

There shall be peace and friendship between His Britannic Majesty and His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd and its Dependencies. Each of the high contracting parties agrees and promises to use all possible means to prevent his territory being used as a base for activities directed against the present or future interests of the other.

ARTICLE 2.

His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd and its Dependencies hereby recognises the special position of His Britannic Majesty in Iraq, Transjordan and Palestine.

ARTICLE 3.

His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd and its Dependencies hereby undertakes to facilitate the performance of the pilgrimage by British subjects and British-protected persons of Moslem faith, and to protect such persons during the performance of the pilgrimage.

ARTICLE 4.

His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd and its Dependencies agrees that the property of the aforesaid pilgrims who may die in the territories of His Majesty shall be handed over to the British representative in the said territories, or to such authority as he may appoint for the purpose, to be disposed of in accordance with the law applicable to the case. The British representative in the said territories will see that any dues or taxes which are payable on such property under Nejd or Hejazi laws are duly paid.

ARTICLE 5.

His Britannic Majesty agrees to recognise the national status of all subjects of His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd and its Dependencies who may at any time be within the territories of His Britannic Majesty or within British-protected territory or territory in respect of which His Britannic Majesty has accepted a mandate on behalf of the League of Nations.

On his part, His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd and its Dependencies agrees to recognise the national status of all British subjects or persons enjoying the protection of His Britannic Majesty who may be at any time within the territories of His Majesty.

ARTICLE 6.

His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd and its Dependencies undertakes, as his fathers did before him, to refrain from all aggression on, or interference with, the territories of Kuwait, Bahrain, and of the Sheikhs of Katar and the Oman Coast, who are under the protection of the Government of His Britannic Majesty and who have treaty relations with the said Government.

ARTICLE 7.

His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd and its Dependencies undertakes to co-operate with His Britannic Majesty in the suppression of the slave trade and to recognise the right of manumission of His Britannic Majesty's consular officers at Jeddah and elsewhere.

ARTICLE 8.

The present treaty shall be ratified and the ratifications shall be exchanged as soon as possible. It shall come into force immediately upon ratification and shall be binding during seven years from the date of its coming into force, when the treaty concluded between His Britannic Majesty and His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd and its Dependencies, then Sultan of Nejd, on the 26th December, 1915, shall cease to have effect. In case neither of the high contracting parties shall have given notice to the other six months before the expiration of the said period of seven years of his intention to terminate the treaty, it shall remain in force until the expiration of six months from the day on which either of the high contracting parties shall have given such notice.

The present treaty has been drawn up in quadruplicate in English and Arabic. Both texts shall have the same validity, but in case of divergence the English text shall prevail. One copy of each text shall remain deposited in the archives of the Government of His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd and its Dependencies and one copy of each text in those of the Government of His Britannic Majesty, the remaining copies being used for the purpose of the exchange of ratifications provided for in this article.

In witness whereof, &c.

Enclosure 2 in No. 50.

Lieutenant-Colonel Prideaux to Mr. Amery.

(Confidential.)
Sir,

Bushire, June 9, 1926.

I HAVE the honour to submit, for the consideration and orders of His Majesty's Government, a report on the situation which is being created in Trucial Oman, and particularly in the inland portion of that territory lying between Hasa ("the Sanjak of Nejd" the Turks called the district when they possessed it) and the Sultanate of Muscat and Oman, by the activities of the Amir (Governor of Hasa), who represents the Sultan of Nejd in Eastern Arabia.

2. I attach a note with a map* about this area and the tribes who dwell in it. My information is practically all extracted from Lorimer's "Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, 1908," but the limits of the sub-districts are outlined tentatively according to the letter-press, as the map which accompanied Lorimer's work does not show them.

3. When Ibn Saud captured Hasa from the Turks in 1913, he did in fact, I believe, acquire and annex to his State the large desert region called Jafurah and the isolated oasis of Jabrin—although the Turks had exercised no authority in either—because (1) the only inhabitants of, or visitors to, these two tracts are Al Morra and Ajman Bedouin, whose fellow-tribesmen certainly have connection with Hasa, and (2) no sheikh of the coast has ever exercised authority there.

4. In November–December 1922 Sir Percy Cox had conversations† with Ibn Saud at Ojair about the grant of a concession for oil in the Hasa district to the Eastern and General Syndicate. Sir Percy found that the Sultan proposed to include the whole of Katar in this concession and took him to task for it.

In the end the Sultan accepted as his eastern boundary a line running due south from the head of Salwah Bey (at the bottom of the Gulf of Bahrein), and in due course this line was given to the syndicate as the eastern border of its concession. Looking at the "Gazetteer" map, one might imagine that the whole of Jafura lies to the west of this line, but the letter-press clearly shows that it does not. It seems to me that Ibn Saud can hardly be expected to refrain from exercising jurisdiction over the Al Morra all over the Jafura desert.

* Not reproduced.

† Vide Enclosure 4.

5. The coastal tracts east of Katar and the Dhafrah desert, with its numerous oases, on the other hand, are inhabited—more or less sparsely—by Bani Yas, who are fellow-tribesmen of the Chiefs of Abu Dhabi and Dibai, and Manasir, who have no connection with Hasa but deal with the towns of Trucial Oman, and resort, in considerable and increasing numbers, to its pearl-banks.

6. East of Dhafrah are the oases of Dhaid, Baraimi, Hafit and Mahadha. By some authorities the last three of these are geographically located in a region called Jau, which Mr. Lorimer styled "Independent Oman."

Dhaid, which is 30 miles inland and east of Shargah, belongs to that chiefship, but the Bedouin who live round it are Beni Kitab, subordinate to the Sheikh of Umm at Kaiwain.

Baraimi is occupied by two opposing tribes—the Dhawahir, who are allies of the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi, and the Naim, who for the last three years have been actually at feud with this chief. The Naim properly belong to Dhahirah (Oman Sultanate), but they also own Hafit, and a large contingent of them, including the Chief of Ajman and the petty Sheikhs of Hamriyah and Hairah, subordinate to Shargah, are settled on the trucial coast. In the deserts surrounding Baraimi, besides the Naim, are Awamir and Daru Bedouin, whose main bodies reside further east in Muscat territory.

Mahadhah, inhabited by Bani Kaab, according to my latest information, should be regarded as belonging to the Sultanate of Muscat.

7. South-east of Dhafrah is the large district of Dhahirah, containing numerous towns, which indubitably belongs historically and geographically to the Oman Sultanate. Until lately its political sympathies appear to have leant to the side of the Sultan of Muscat against the Ibadhi Imam of Oman; but last year the latter made a determined effort to attach it forcibly to his side, fearing that otherwise the Wahabis will absorb it. The attempt failed, and it remains to be seen who will make the next move to deprive the Sultan of Oman of this district.

8. The recent history of all this disputed country, so far as can be ascertained, is as follows:—

When Sheikh Sultan-bin-Zaid murdered his brother Hamdan, the Chief of Abu Dhabi, in 1922, he found that his family's authority in Baraimi had fallen to a low ebb. The Naim had summoned to their aid the Beni Kitab, the Awamir and the Daru of Dhahirah and were then holding their own in conflicts in Dhafrah with the Bani Yas, who were led by Sheikh Sultan's brothers and cousins. In June 1925 it was reported that the Awamir and the Daru had appealed to the Amir of Hasa to protect them from the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi. Presumably they really wished their encroachments on Dhafrah to be confirmed to them. It was reported in the same month that the Amir had sent an official named Said to collect zikat in the Baraimi oasis. This official employed about sixty men, who went about in fifteen parties. They were generally, but not invariably, successful. The tax demanded was 1 rial per camel, 1 piastre per head of cattle and 5 per cent. of the flocks. Said arrested and hanged a Hasawi refugee in Baraimi. It was also he who notified to the Sheikhs of Abu Dhabi and Dibai that the Amir of Hasa had taken the Awamir and Daru tribes (Muscat subjects, fundamentally) under the Sultan of Nejd's protection.

9. In July 1925 it was reported that the Sheikhs of the Naim of Baraimi, the Bani Kaab and the Beni Kitab had been negotiating with the young Sheikh of Shargah for mutual assistance in the event of aggression by the deputy of the Amir of Hasa.

10. In August 1925, after a conference between relatives of the Sheikh of Dibai and Sheikh Isa-bin-Saleh, the Ibadhi supporter of the Imam of Oman, it was agreed that these two sheikhs should support each other in resisting Wahabi encroachments. Immediately afterwards the Chief of Abu Dhabi paid visits to Dibai, Shargah and Umm-al-Kaiwain, while Sheikh Isa-bin-Saleh visited Baraimi.

11. In December 1925 the Chief of Umm-al-Kiawain and the Naimi headman of Hamriyah took the Beni Kitab Sheikh to Abu Dhabi to settle the feud between the Beni Kitab and the Bani Yas.

12. In the same month the Ibadhi leaders of Oman, who are equally anti-Sultan (of Muscat) and anti-Ibn Saud, commenced their offensive against Dhahirah and Baraimi and initially achieved considerable success. After the capture of Ibri, however, they quarrelled. Sheikh Suleiman-bin-Hammar defected, the Sheikh Isa-bin-Saleh fell ill. The Imam and Sheikh Isa then abandoned the expedition and returned to their homes.

13. In the same month the Sheikh of Dibai received a letter, purport of which has only now been communicated to me.* In it the Amir of Hasa conveys a serious threat against the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi.

14. In February 1926 it was reported that the Amir of Hasa had sent a posse of police to Shargah in pursuit of a Nejd criminal. In the letter addressed to the sheikh the extradition of the criminal was demanded. The accused was not found and the Nejd police went on to Ajman and Ras-al-Khaimah. Apparently the man escaped detection. Incidentally, it was reported at the same time that Najdi slave-traders were boldly bringing African negroes and (according to later reports) war captives down to the coastal towns for sale; and, further, that the Trucial sheikhs were afraid to interfere with them.

15. In March 1926, the Amir, Ibn Daluwi, sent two superior officials, Said and Ibn Mansur, to collect zikat in Dhafrah and Baraimi.

16. In two judicial cases recently the Amir of Hasa has written (a) to the Kazi of Shargah and (b) to the Sheikh of Dibai, chiding them for not satisfying Nejd complainants. The Kazi sent his son to Hofuf to express regret.

17. To sum up the position, it would seem that the Amir of Hasa has two immediate objectives: (1) To include Trucial Oman and "Independent Oman" *in toto* in the Kingdom of Nejd; and (2) to get into direct contact (including the task of protecting its tribes) with a large district of the Sultanate of Oman, which is opposed to the Imam and at the same time is almost independent of the Sultan.

18. To serve both objectives, he must first absorb the whole of Dhafrah—a region of about 14,000 square miles, which stretches 175 miles from west to east and 80 from north to south, bounded on the north by the Persian Gulf and on the south by the Ruba'-al-Khali (Great Desert). This region, along with three smaller coastal tracts to its west, all historically and *de jure* belong to the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi.

19. East of Dhafrah, the Wahabis will have little difficulty in procuring the submission of the people of Baraimi, Hafit and Dhahirah, some on account of their antipathy for Abu Dhabi, and the others being hostile to the Ibadhis.

20. As regards the Trucial chiefs themselves, I believe that if they see the annexation of Dhafrah and Baraimi achieved they will seek the best possible terms for themselves from Ibn Saud and offer to join the Nejd State. They will be satisfied if they can obtain recognition as hereditary and permanent Governors of their respective territories.

A large portion of their subjects are Hanbali in sect, and they have not forgotten that a hundred years ago they were Wahabis themselves. The Kazis in all the chiefships except Abu Dhabi and Dibai are actually Najdis.

21. In these circumstances it seems to me that if His Majesty's Government wish to preserve the individuality of the Trucial chiefships and at the same time to safeguard Muscat from aggression, they must ask the Ruler of Nejd in peremptory language to compel his representative in Hasa to observe the boundary accepted in 1922 (with or without the rest of Jafurah) to abstain from minatory acts against the Trucial chiefs, and, in important cases, to address this Residency about inter-Statel matters.

22. It will be remembered that in 1923 a very similar complaint of encroachments on Katar's independence was telegraphed to you in Colonel Knox's No. 838, dated the 21st September, 1923. Ibn Saud was given a severe warning on receipt of your telegram of the 12th November, 1923, since when no occasion to complain about Katar has arisen.

Whether Ibn Saud will be equally attentive to remonstrance now in his changed circumstances remains to be seen.

23. I think, personally, that the time has come for a stronger political influence to be introduced into the Trucial States than that of the Arab Residency Agent. Only the presence of a British officer will encourage the chiefs to resist the subtle and intensive propaganda which the Wahabis notoriously push on their other frontiers.

24. Alternatively, the question has to be faced: "If the chiefs jointly, or one or more of them separately, express their intention—in defiance of treaty obligations, but without repudiating the maritime truce—to enter the Nejd State, will His Majesty's Government accept the situation?" The difficulties of our

Indian traders will certainly be increased for a long time to come, and many people opine, I believe, that the Najd State is not likely to continue as it is after Abdul Aziz's death.

25. I am sending a copy of this despatch to the Government of India.

I have, &c.

F. R. PRIDEAUX,

Political Resident in the Persian Gulf.

Enclosure 3 in No. 50.

Note on the Tracts and Tribes of South Hasa, Trucial Oman, "Independent Oman," and Dhahirah (Oman Sultanate), located between the Coast of the Persian Gulf and Ruba'-al-Khali (the Great Salt Desert).

SOUTH of the Hasa oasis is the extensive Jafurah desert, which extends eastwards at least to the 52nd meridian of east longitude.

Its south-western and south-eastern corners are respectively the Jabrin oasis and a point about 10 miles south of Idd village in Dhafrah. Jafurah is almost as inhospitable a land as the Ruba'-al-Khali desert, which borders it on the south. Its only inhabitants, besides Ajman Bedouin on its northern fringe, are Al Morra, who own the Jabrin oasis and who have dealings occasionally with the people of the Hasa oasis.

Like the Bani Hajir of Central Hasa (Biyadh), a few of these Al Morra also repair occasionally to Katar to receive hospitality and gifts from the Al Thani family.

The boundary on the coast between Katar and Abu Dhabi was ruled in 1907 by the Government of India to be the "Khor" (bay) of Odaid. At Odaid village, which is the north-western-most point of the small coastal tract known as Akal, is Odaid village, founded, and periodically abandoned, by Bani Yas tribesmen. Manasir from Dhafrah and Al Morra from Jafura occasionally camp in this tract.

East of Akal is Mijan, a desert containing no settled inhabitants, though wells and good grazing exist. The Bedouin who encamp in Akal also frequent this region. It is bordered on the south by Jafurah at a distance of 70 miles from the coast.

East of Mijan is the saline and marshy tract called Sabakhat Matti. Being liable to inundation from the sea at high tides for 15 miles, and containing no wells or grass, it is avoided even by the Manasir, who, on their movements to the north-west from Dhafrah, prefer to pass through Jafurah.

East of Sabakhat Matti is the large desert of Dhafrah, containing six sub-divisions—Taff-Bainunah, Taff, Bainunah, Dhafrah proper, Kufa and Liwa—of which the southernmost, Liwa, is the only one to support a settled population. These inhabit thirty or forty village oases, possessing considerable date groves, amongst the sand dunes. The whole population is composed of Bani Yas and Manasir Bedouin. The former are fellow-tribesmen of the Sheikhs of Abu Dhabi and Dibai.

The Manasir are friendly and allied to the Bani Yas. An increasing number of them go pearl diving in summer.

East of Dhafrah are the towns and villages of the Trucial chiefs, settled in Oman-ash-Shumali, "North-(Western) Oman." South of this coast is Khatam, a grazing district only visited in winter by Bani Yas, Manasir and Naim: further south is Ja, with its oases—Baraimi, Hafit, Kabil and Mahadhah.

Baraimi oasis is populated by two tribes only—the Dhawahir, who are subordinate to the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi, and the Naim, who are unfriendly to him. The Naim, who also possess Hafit and Kabil, mainly hail from Dhahirah (Oman Sultanate), but they also have colonised a number of villages on the Trucial coast.

Mahadhah, occupied by Bani Kaab, seems to have no connection with Baraimi. Its sheikhs possess properties in Sohar (of Muscat).

South of Hafit and east of Dhafrah lies the great sub-montane district of Dhahirah, belonging to the Oman Sultanate. This contains a number of towns—Ibri, Araki, seat of a Wali (Governor under Muscat), Dhank, Yankul, &c. The nomads of this district are the Naim, Awamir, and Daru, all of whom are generally at feud with both the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi and the Ibadhi leaders of Oman.

It is intelligible, therefore, that they should be inclined to welcome Wahabi advances.

To sum up the tribal situation, it may be said that the Sheikhs of Abu Dhabi and Dibai, who are Maliki in sect, like the Chief of Bahrein and the people of Egypt, are whole-heartedly opposed to Ibn Saud. The Bani Yas and Manasir of Dhafrah, Mijan and Akal follow the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi, as also do the Dhawahir of Baraimi.

The Al Ali Sheikh of Umm-al-Kaiwain, the Bani Kitab tribe, who are associated with him, and the Bani Kaab are inclined to be neutral, though they all are Hanbali.

The Naim of Baraimi, especially, but also those of Dhahirah and of Ajman town and the coastal villages, and the Bedouin tribes of Dhahirah—Awamir, and Daru—seem already to have welcomed the extension to them of Wahabi protection.

The Kawasim (Jowasim) Sheikhs of Shargah and Ras-al-Khaimah 100 years ago were most bigoted Wahabis. As the Shargah chief's father-in-law is a Naimi, who, after recent events, must certainly be anti-British, it remains to be seen whether the young man's near neighbour of Dinai can keep him clear of pitfalls.

Enclosure 4 in No. 50.

High Commissioner for Iraq to Government of India.

Sir,

Bagdad, January 19, 1923.

I AM directed to reply to Foreign Department letter, dated the 7th December, on the subject of the apparent inclination of His Highness Ibn Saud to absorb the Katar principality.

2. The High Commissioner had recently spent some days with His Highness (from the 27th November to the 2nd December), during which the status of Katar was in evidence in connection with a project, under consideration by Ibn Saud, for the grant of an oil concession for a tract of Nejd territory. Sir Percy Cox found that, in his discussions with the engineer representing the aspirant concessionaires, His Highness had apparently included the Katar peninsula within the tract of country for which he was prepared to negotiate a concession. Sir Percy Cox at once took him to task, reminding him that he had nothing to do with Katar except to respect it, under the terms of his treaty with us, and insisting on the limitation of his discussions to country west of the longitude of the head of Salwah Bay.

The Sultan accepted this injunction without argument, and the High Commissioner accordingly doubts whether a further communication on the subject is necessary, or indeed advisable, after so short an interval.

He will be fully prepared, however, to return to the attack if there should be any fresh evidence of a disposition on the part of the Sultan to encroach upon Katar.

A copy of this communication is being forwarded to the Resident in the Persian Gulf.

I have, &c.

B. H. BOURDILLON,

Secretary to His Excellency

the High Commissioner for Iraq.

Enclosure 5 in No. 50.

Translation of a Letter, dated 10th Jamadi I, 1344 (= November 27, 1925), from Amir Abdallah-bin-Jaluwi to Sheikh Said-bin-Maktum, Ruler of Debai.

(After Compliments.)

I HAVE written you, prior to this, several letters and trust they have reached you. There is nothing to be communicated except that affairs are quiet and good.

You know, may God preserve you, that we are one bone in which there is no joint, and our relations are very strongly consolidated. God knows that we love you just as one closely related to us. We have heard from the Bedouin some old news which are in consonance with our old friendship. These good relations no alterer can alter.

We have now heard that our brother Sultan-bin-Zaid has sent you a messenger warning you that Said* has made for your side with 400 men, riding dromedaries, that he is digging wells, and that we are following in his footsteps, but that you have

* A Hasa official.

rejected this information and you have not yet yielded to the least suspicion. This justifies what I think of you, and I thank you for your friendship in the past and now. This proves that you repudiate lies told about Ibn Saud and you punish liars. We and all the Moslems are grateful for this. We are. I swear by God Almighty, on your side should anyone rise against you. Our brother Sultan is mad; he does not know that we are stronger than he in men and materials; the lies carried to him by the Bedouin excite him; but lies that excite men do not yield any fruit. However, sooner or later our power shall prevail upon him and others.
(Usual ending.)

Enclosure 6 in No. 50.

India Office to Colonial Office.

Sir,

India Office, August 10, 1926.

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for India to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 24th July, forwarding a copy of Colonel Prideaux's despatch No. 13 of the 9th June regarding Wahabi penetration, at the instigation of the Amir of Hasa, in Trucial Oman, and to transmit, to be laid before Mr. Secretary Amery, a copy of a letter in which the Government of India support the Political Resident's recommendation that a protest should be made to the Sultan of Nejd against these infringements of the undertaking given in article 6 of the treaty of the 26th December, 1915, with Ibn Saud.

I am also to invite a reference to my letter of to-day's date, in which the Secretary of State records the view, which he has reached after further consideration, that it would not be likely to serve any useful purpose merely to communicate to Ibn Saud copies of the various agreements existing between the British Government and the Arab rulers on the Persian Gulf littoral, and recommends that an attempt be made to induce the Sultan of Nejd to repeat in the proposed new treaty the substance of the sixth article of the treaty of 1915. If, on further consideration, the revised views of the Secretary of State for India commend themselves to Mr. Amery and to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (to whom copies of both letters are being sent), it would be consistent, and would seem not unlikely to prepare the way, for the inclusion of the suggested article in the new treaty, to make representations at once to the Sultan of Nejd against his subordinates' violations of the undertaking given in 1915. The Secretary of State for India therefore supports the Government of India's recommendation on this aspect of the matter, and on the issue of advice to the Trucial chiefs not to have direct dealings with Nejd officials.

The actions of the Emir of Hasa to which exception could rightly be taken seem to be the hanging of a Hasani refugee in Baraimi, and the notification to the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi and Dibai that the Emir of Hasa had taken the Awamir and Daru tribes under the Sultan of Nejd's protection (paragraph 8 of Colonel Prideaux's despatch); the despatch of the letter to the Sheikh of Debai (paragraph 13); the despatch of police to Shargah (paragraph 14); and the Amir's intervention in judicial cases (paragraph 16). The Secretary of State, as at present advised, for the reasons indicated in my letter P. 2585, doubts the expediency of protesting against the levy of zikat, objectionable though this may be.

Nor does it seem advisable to ask the Sultan of Nejd, as the Political Resident recommends, to compel the Amir of Hasa "to observe the boundary accepted in 1922," unless Colonel Prideaux is in possession of clear evidence that the Saud did commit himself, either in his conversations with Sir P. Cox or subsequently, to definite acceptance of the Salawah Bay line as the eastern boundary of Nejd. With a view to the eventual determination by treaty of this boundary, as suggested in my letter P. 2585, it would appear advisable to enquire of the Political Resident, by telegraph, what precisely is the information at his disposal in regard to this question.

Copy of this letter is being sent to the Foreign Office and Admiralty.

I am, &c.

L. D. WAKELY.

Enclosure 7 in No. 50.

Government of India to India Office.

(Confidential.)

Sir,

Simla, July 14, 1926.

I AM directed to refer to despatch from the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf to His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies, dated the 9th June, 1926.

2. The question raised is perhaps somewhat outside the present sphere of the Government of India, to whom, however, the integrity of the Arab States bordering on the Persian Gulf must be of some concern.

3. The Government of India support the recommendations made in paragraph 21 of the Political Resident's despatch, and think that the representation to the Sultan of Nejd against interference with the Trucial chiefs might appropriately be made in general form under the 1915 agreement, without any attempt being made to define territorial limits. At the same time, they consider that the Trucial chiefs should be warned not to have direct dealings with officials of the Nejd Government.

I have, &c.

DENYS BRAY.

Enclosure 8 in No. 50.

PRELIMINARY DRAFT.

Draft Protocol.

WHEREAS with a view to fixing the frontier between Nejd and Transjordan and settling certain questions connected therewith, an agreement known as the Hadda Agreement was concluded between His Britannic Majesty's Government and the Government of Nejd, and was signed at Bahra Camp on the 2nd November, 1925 (corresponding to the 15th Rabi' Thani, 1344); and

Whereas it is considered advisable by His Britannic Majesty's Government and by the Governments of Transjordan and the Hejaz to come to an agreement regarding the frontier between the Hejaz and Transjordan.

We, the undersigned, His Majesty Abdul Aziz-ibn-Abdur Rahman-al-Feisal Al Saud, King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd and its Dependencies, and S. R. Jordan, Acting British Agent and Consul in Jeddah, the duly accredited plenipotentiary of His Britannic Majesty, have agreed upon the following articles:—

The frontier between the Hejaz and Transjordan starts from the intersection of meridian 38° and parallel 29° 35', which marks the termination of the frontier between Nejd and Transjordan, and proceeds in a straight line to a point on the Hejaz Railway 2 miles south of Mudawwara. From this point it proceeds in a straight line to a point on the Gulf of Akbara 2 miles south of the town of that name.

Signed, &c.

[E 6118/180/91]

No. 51.

Foreign Office to Acting Consul Jordan (Jeddah).

(No. 127.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, November 4, 1926.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 126 of the 3rd November, regarding the negotiations with Ibn Saud for the conclusion of a new treaty, I am directed by Secretary Sir Austen Chamberlain to explain to you the present attitude of His Majesty's Government in the matter of granting licences for the export of arms and ammunition to the rulers in the Arabian Peninsula.

2. I am to transmit to you the accompanying copy of a despatch* from His Majesty's Ambassador at Paris, enclosing a copy of a note addressed by his Excellency to the French Minister for Foreign Affairs on the 29th June last. You will see that His Majesty's Government have now informed the French, Italian and Belgian Governments that there is no longer any need for the embargo on the export of war

* Part XVIII, No. 173.

material to Arabia, which was imposed, at British instigation, at the time of the conflict between ex-King Hussein and Ibn Saud.

3. It seems possible that in the course of the forthcoming negotiations Ibn Saud may enquire whether His Majesty's Government will permit him to purchase war material in this country. In such case you may inform him that there is no objection to his placing orders for war material in the United Kingdom provided that the limitations laid down in the Arms Traffic Convention* of 1925 are observed. (A copy of that convention is enclosed herein for your information.)

I am, &c.

LANCELOT OLIPHANT.

[E 6206/2660/91]

No. 52.

Sir R. Graham to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received November 8.)

(No. 930.)

Sir,

Rome, November 4, 1926.

I HAVE the honour to report that I have carried out the instructions contained in your despatch No. 1459 of the 25th ultimo with regard to the forthcoming conversations on the subject of British and Italian interests in the Red Sea. The Italian authorities appeared to understand and to be perfectly reconciled to the attitude adopted by His Majesty's Government in the question. Commendatore Gasparini is leaving for Eritrea on the 10th November, but will return for the negotiation whenever it takes place.

I have, &c.

R. GRAHAM.

[E 6479/6479/91]

No. 53.

Lord Lloyd to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received November 23.)

(No. 709. Confidential.)

Sir,

Cairo, November 9, 1926.

WITH reference to paragraphs 28-32 of the Jeddah situation report for September last, I have the honour to inform you that I learn unofficially from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs that the Egyptian Government are inclined to admit the right of the Hejaz Government to claim as local subjects the Hejaz-born children of Egyptian nationals, and to insist upon Hejaz nationality as a condition of Hejaz Government employment.

2. The Egyptian Government are not therefore disposed to do battle with the Hejaz Government on behalf of Sheikh Hafez Wahba, Ibn Saud's Egyptian-born adviser, who, in possible provision of a fall from favour, is reported recently to have taken unsuccessful steps to have his Egyptian passport renewed and his Egyptian status locally established. It is, of course, possible that this attitude of the Egyptian Government may be modified, under parliamentary or other pressure, at a later date.

3. A more serious threat to good relations between Egypt and the Hejaz lies in the refusal of the authorities in Mecca to allow the Egyptian "tekiah" or hostel to celebrate the anniversary of the Prophet's birth with the usual illuminations and ceremonial, or, indeed, otherwise than behind closed doors. On the Egyptian consul's protest, Ibn Saud gave assurances that full liberty to practise Islam according to Egyptian conventions would in future be accorded to the tekiah; but of these the Egyptian Government are sceptical. They consider the incident, which I am informed has made a very bad impression upon King Fuad personally, as a poor response to their lavish entertainment of Ibn Saud's eldest son during his recent sojourn in this country.

4. A copy of this despatch is being addressed to the acting British agent and consul, Jeddah.

I have, &c.

LLOYD, High Commissioner.

* "Further Correspondence respecting Traffic in Arms and Ammunition," Part XXII, No. 76.

[E 6655/367/91]

No. 54.

Acting Consul Mayers to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received December 4.)

(No. 133. Secret.)

Sir,

Jeddah, November 3, 1926.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith my report on the situation in the Hejaz during the period the 1st to the 31st October, 1926.

Copies of this report are being sent to Egypt, Jerusalem (2), Bagdad, Aden, Simla, Beirut (for Damascus), Khartum (through Port Sudan) and Singapore.

I have, &c.

NORMAN MAYERS.

Enclosure in No. 54.

Jeddah Report for the period October 1 to October 31, 1926.

DURING the period under review the steamships which tramp the Red Sea have not failed to disembark at Jeddah the one or two interesting oddities who appear to visit the mournful shores of the Hejaz at regular periods in the quiet interval between pilgrim seasons. The first to arrive was a certain Ahmed Zaky Pasha, coming from the Yemen.

2. Ahmed Zaky Pasha is an old Egyptian ex-official of garrulous habits and Falstaffian port, who recently made a trip to Sanaa in order to collect for the Moslem press whatever notes on subjects of geographical or historical interest he could pick up there. He at the same time imposed on himself, which was more important, a mission of mediation between the Imam Yahya and Ibn Saud. With neither prince did he have any measure of success. It is rather like the case of Colonel House. Together with his companion, Nabieh Bey-el-Azmeh, a Syrian of Egypt, the pasha has now returned to the comforts of Egypt, having accomplished nothing, but declaring that strife between the two rulers of the Jazirat-el-Arab would inevitably end in the weakening of Islam. It had been hoped that Ibn Saud would be induced to appoint Nabieh Bey-el-Azmeh as his agent in Sanaa for conversations with the Imam. The King, however, thinks that no useful purpose would be served by such an appointment.

3. Another traveller to the Hejaz has been a certain Dr. Wolfgang von Weisl, who landed with an unkempt beard and Arab head-dress, but who turned out to be a Palestinian journalist from Tel Aviv. He had with him the works of Doughty, Burton and Philby, and declared his intention of exploring the obscured Nejdian oases which Mr. Philby in his investigations had not been able to cover. He was not, of course, allowed to proceed, and I doubt whether he came to the point of asking the necessary permission. But he did get an interview with Ibn Saud, in the course of which His Majesty made an interesting declaration of his policy with regard to the Imam.

4. "I have no particular quarrel," he said, "with the Imam Yahya, and I am at peace with him. On the other hand, I have nothing specially in common with him, and it seems to me that Asir is a useful buffer between us. But that is not the only reason for my wish to see Asir continue to exist. The Idrisi is my son and has taken shelter under my shadow. I cannot for that reason sit still and see Sabia and Jizan swallowed by the Imam. I shall be forced to take action if the Imam attempts to take those two places. I am strong, and I have troops."

5. As far as can be seen, this has every chance of being an accurate account of what Ibn Saud actually said. It seems reasonable to suppose that Ibn Saud has far too much to do in his own dominions to desire war against any of his neighbours. It is no easy task to control Nejd, with its vast frontiers and unruly tribesmen, both settled and migratory, and the Hejaz, with the mass of thorny political, economic and religious questions inherited along with its sovereignty. To these cares are added the anxiety of making the next pilgrimage a political and financial success, the question of relations with the outside Moslem world and with the Christian Powers. It is most unlikely that, with this burden to bear, confused by a worthless and ever-changing entourage, Ibn Saud is himself meditating bringing help to the Syrian Nationalists, as the French seemed to fear some months ago, or is eager to measure his strength with that of the Imam Yahya.

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6. There is confirmation of this in a conversation which a close friend of Ibn Saud and a man of moderate opinions had a day or two ago with a member of the staff of this agency. Ibn Saud, this informant said, had no illusions about affairs in the Arab peninsula. Between its sovereigns no fundamental harmony was possible, for it was their nature each to seize any opportunity of crushing another. But Ibn Saud did not view the rumours about the Imam's hostile intentions towards him with much concern. Not one of the Arab princes was at liberty, or had the power to attack another. The Imam, for example, had internal troubles in the Yemen, where rivals were working against him. Two of the Zeidi sheikhs subordinate to him were, one openly, one secretly, aspiring to the imamate, and these pretenders were attempting to induce Ibn Saud to help them; apart from that, some of the Zeidi tribes were refractory. Again, the Imam had the British Government against him. He had the Idrisi still to count with. The Idrisi was not dead, he had fighting men still at his call, and if he could be helped with arms and ammunition he could still give the Imam something to ponder over. Lastly, the Imam was so miserly that he would think twice before pouring out his gold to no purpose.

7. There may have been an indirect appeal in this conversation. However, its chief importance is that, in conjunction with the statement made to von Weisl, it provides a basis for building up a theory of Ibn Saud's attitude towards the Imam. That attitude might very reasonably be as follows: Ibn Saud has no particular sympathy for the Imam, and feels that the Imam is not particularly friendly to himself. Some day it may come to a trial of strength between them. If a conflict came, Ibn Saud is in quite as good a position as his rival. Each has worries at home which should make for peace. But if the Imam wants to throw down a challenge, let him try to absorb what is left of Asir. Should he take that line, the present policy of indifference assumed by Ibn Saud might have to be revised. Let the Imam think well over his situation before antagonising the British on one side and Ibn Saud on the other.

8. Meanwhile, it is reported that 2,000 troops have been sent recently to the southern frontier posts. But, as if to prove that he has no hostile intention at present against the Imam, Ibn Saud has gone on his long-promised tour to Medina, for which he professes a love "like that of the Prophet." His Majesty seems to dislike heartily the climate of Mecca and Jeddah, and his remarks suggest nostalgia for the drier air of the desert uplands of Nejd. He spent a week in Jeddah on the way, and it is considered here that, now the King has finally gone, his absence will be a long one. He himself speaks of an absence of some months. After his stay in Medina, he may extend his tour to Nejd and perhaps Riyadh, which he has not seen for a year and a half.

9. On contact with Ibn Saud it is impossible not to admire the King's fairness, his shrewdness and his frank simplicity. The pity is that he has not found counsellors to help him in a task of government for which one man alone is physically incapable. Personal greed and private jealousies are no less present round Ibn Saud than they were round King Ali. I have mentioned this fact at this point because it may possibly have a bearing on His Majesty's momentary attitude towards Iraq and Transjordan. Against both he expresses himself in terms of irritation. He seems at present to feel that he got the worst of the Bahra and Hadda Agreements and that they fetter him, while they have not reduced trouble on the frontiers. As far as raiding during the last six months goes, he feels that his tribesmen are on the credit side, and claims that if he had not restrained them they would have balanced the account long ago.

10. He appears to have been specially disappointed by the break-up of the conference at Ma'an between his representative and those of Transjordan, to which reference was made in the last Jeddah report, paragraph 13. Indeed, the failure of that meeting seems momentarily to have spoilt the pitch for future meetings of the Hadda tribunal, which was founded to settle such disputes. However, when it has been made clear to the King that the failure of the meeting was entirely due to the preposterous behaviour of two persons who attended as semi-official Nejd delegates, his faith in tribunals may revive. The present task of this agency will be to reassure him that the British officials in Transjordan take the tribunal as a serious matter, and will not brook external interferences with its proceedings.

11. For Ibn Saud suggests that the raid annoyance he is so restless about is connived at, if not instigated, by the Emir Abdullah and King Feisal, or their partisans. One reminds him when he refers to this conception that there are British authorities in both Transjordan and Iraq whose duty and interest it is to prevent

any such encouragement of tribal raids. But the idea sticks in his mind. Perhaps, from time to time, his traditional enmity to the Hashemite house manifests itself in this way. It is also possible that there are persons among his advisers whose interest it is to keep that animosity alight.

12. It is quite conceivable that the Syrians and pan-Arabs in Ibn Saud's entourage resent the existence of a Transjordan-Iraq corridor of territory cutting off Nejd from any extension of her influence northward towards Syria. Ibn Saud himself, as has been argued above, is probably aware that he has too much to do at home to seek further expansion of his influence, at least for the present. It is on the other hand, less certain that some of his friends view affairs in such a common-sense light. Conceivably, these persons may one day try to exert their influence to induce the King to support Arab claims in Palestine. Against that contingency, however, can for the present be set the King's own good sense and his friendliness to Great Britain.

13. Besides, the royal counsellors are always changing. The last to be dismissed is Sheikh Hafiz Wahba, the Egyptian, who is leaving shortly, although up to the present he has been one of the King's most valued advisers, former Governor of Mecca, a man at least of some experience, and in religious affairs an influence towards moderation. He leaves denouncing the Syrians whose advice the King takes—Sheikh Rashid Riza, editor of the Egyptian paper, the "Minar," Sheikh Kamel-el-Qassab, Hassan Wafqi Bey, Director of Police, and Sheikh Yussef Yasin—and praying devoutly that they will lead the King into no hare-brained adventures or ambitions. He is going by way of India to Koweit, where he has relatives, and where, if there are any outstanding matters between Nejd and Iraq, he will act for Ibn Saud.

14. The status of the newly-arrived Turkish representative has now been announced as diplomatic representative of the Turkish Republic, which presumably implies formal recognition of Ibn Saud. His office is styled a Legation, and he has taken precedence over the rest of the foreign agents in Jeddah. On presenting his papers to His Majesty the King, Shevket Bey recalled the old associations, based on brotherhood and co-operation, which formerly existed between Turks and Arabs, and said he hoped that such noble memories would find new expression in the revived friendship between the two Governments. It must be conceded that the new Minister had a difficult job on hand when he recalled the past, and perhaps took the simplest way out of the dilemma by deliberate misrepresentation. In speaking about present relations he was on surer ground. His private views are distinctly contrary, nevertheless, to his public platitudes. He considers the country savage and its inhabitants nothing less than barbarians, and laments the evil day that brought him to the Hejaz. He can have little routine work to do here, and spends most of his time paying calls or humbly fishing from the coral reefs. One can only suppose that his Government's purpose in sending him to the Hejaz was to please the older-fashioned people in Turkey, or else to mark the Turkish Government's interest in the nebulous schemes of Islamic unity which are floating around the world. There is some talk of a treaty of friendship between the Turks and Ibn Saud.

15. Ibn Saud has been pleased by the reception given to his son in Great Britain. He has not personally mentioned the question of the Emir Feisal's failure to open the Ahmadiya mosque at Southfields, but an article in the official newspaper "Umm-el-Kura" defined his position in the matter, and the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, in a conversation, has confirmed it. Proposals for Feisal's opening of the mosque were begun months ago, and no objections were raised. When, however, the prince arrived in England, the Egyptian newspapers began to discuss the propriety of his performing the ceremony, and to write that the mosque would be used by Moslems, Christians and Jews alike—a temple, in fact, for all religions. Thereupon Ibn Saud instructed his son to decline the invitation. But these instructions brought telegrams from London and India, pointing out the harmless nature of the sect, the orthodoxy of the people using the mosque (Ahmadiyas are not prevented from making the Haj to Mecca), and the deplorable effect, as far as propaganda was concerned, of the King's refusal. Finally, Ibn Saud, pulled this way and that, telegraphed saying that Feisal must decide for himself what course to pursue. If the mosque was to be for all religions, as related by the "Ahram" in a quotation from the "Morning Post," then the prince would have to decline; but if, after careful consultation with Moslems in London, it was ascertained that the mosque was for the different Moslem sects only, then the prince could use his discretion and perform the ceremony of opening. The attitude of Ibn Saud in this

matter is quite reasonable. From the point of view of dogma, the Wahabis, most orthodox of Moslems in their own view, cannot consider the Ahmadiya sect as Orthodox any more than the Christian Church can consider Theosophists orthodox Christians. Ibn Saud is not a man of vast experience, and it is more than likely that what appeared to him in the first place to be a harmless ceremony took a more alarming aspect when he learnt that English clergy, not to mention the Mayor of Wandsworth, were to be present. One can as easily imagine a couple of cardinals being deputed to go down to Brindisi to greet Mrs. Besant and her young protégé from Madras, as Ibn Saud blessing the foregathering of a son of his with latitudinarian curates in a London suburb.

16. The King gave some general views on foreign relations to the journalist mentioned above in paragraph 3. With regard to the Caliphate, Ibn Saud is reported as saying that he would not accept it under any consideration. The fourth requisite of a Caliph was that he should protect the Faithful throughout the world by his sword. He could not do that; no more could the King of Egypt do it. Could he intervene on behalf of the Moslems of Syria, or King Fuad protect the Moslems of Tripoli? There was no Moslem prince strong enough to assume the protection of Islam throughout the wide world. Therefore, in the temporal sense, there could be no Caliph. What could be done was the formation of a kind of majlis of representatives of the Moslem Powers and peoples, which would take the Caliphate, as it were, into commission. As for a leader and an arbitrator in spiritual affairs, the Moslem world had already its Caliph—the Koran.

17. As regards Akaba and Ma'an, the King said that, if his interrogator would read the proceedings of the recent Islamic Conference, he would see that the question of that territory had been avoided. He for the present must observe a like discretion. It was a political question which was not yet solved. As for the Hejaz Railway, the King was willing to approach the problem of its ownership, beginning from the start made at the conference of Lausanne between Turkey and the Allied Powers, when preparatory arrangements for dealing with this problem were made, on the lines of which he himself was ready to begin negotiations. It will be realised that, as there are no means of checking the above account, it is quoted with reserve.

18. The rumours of an impending nationality law alluded to in the last Jeddah report were quickly followed up by the publication of the actual law on the subject. All ex-Ottoman subjects born or established in the Hejaz are declared Hejazis. This provision is reasonable, although it makes no mention of options for Palestinian, Transjordanian or Iraq nationality. But, in addition, all persons born in the Hejaz are proclaimed Hejazis, and every resident in the country not in possession of valid official documents proving his foreign nationality is considered a Hejazi. The two last provisions ignore pointedly any possible capitulatory rights claimed by foreigners.

19. The different foreign representatives at Jeddah, in acknowledging receipt of the official communication of this law, stated that, until they had received instructions from their various Governments on the subject, they would have to reserve the rights of their nationals in respect of the law. The statute shows signs of a too hasty drafting. For instance, the son of a Persian consular officer born in Jeddah will be henceforward a Hejazi unless a provision is added to the contrary. But perhaps, after all, the authors of these rough-shod provisions merely consider them as the first step toward solving the intricate problem of nationality in this country. They may intend that finer details will be left for study when each Power interested defines its relations with the Hejaz. It has been suggested to the Minister for Foreign Affairs that at least children of foreigners, born in the country, should, when they reach years of discretion, be given the option of choosing between local nationality and that of their parents. Nothing so far has come of this suggestion.

20. It is difficult to see what will be the public utility of such drastic regulations, except as a check to the freedom and numbers of foreign residents, with the protection by consuls implied. Nevertheless, very few expressions of alarm on the subject have reached this Agency.

21. The financial straits of the Government have been particularly poignant during October. The Treasury is literally living from hand to mouth, and there is every now and then a painful wait before the arrival of a vessel in port provides customs receipts. A business house in Jeddah which transacts for the Government practically all its remittances of money to foreign countries (there being no banking facilities in the Hejaz) was asked to send a telegraphic remittance of £1,000 to the Emir Feisal in London. The Treasury had not got the £1,000, but promised to

repay it in five days. To the astonishment of the firm concerned, repayment was made in four days, but this commendable promptitude was counterbalanced by another request for a remittance of £1,000, which sum is still owing. The Government has practically no credit. It appears to exist at present on forced loans, which are recuperated by the victims in various devious ways. Between the pilgrimage of one year and that of another come barren months when the bowels of the public Treasury rumble with emptiness. But, apart from the irregular flow of income into the country, there appears to be no system in expenditure. As funds come in, or, rather, before they come in, they are spent. The friends of Ibn Saud may well wish him strong and loyal counsellors. At present his loneliness seems almost tragic.

22. While the King was in Jeddah he asked for a new loan of £25,000 from the leading merchants of the place. It was said at the time that the last loan of £13,000 had not yet been repaid, and that the King was so short of money that he would not be able to proceed to Medina before the steamship "Alavi" came in from Bombay. The latter proved to be an exaggeration, as is doubtless the rumour that the British Government has advanced £500,000 on the Jeddah customs! However, pilgrim dues are to be higher next Haj.

23. The Sudan Government is desirous of regulating the pilgrim traffic between Suakin and Port Sudan, on the one hand, and the Holy Land, on the other, and is considering regulations by which the trip across the Red Sea will henceforward be made in special conditions which will ensure efficient quarantine and passport control. The local Government, for financial reasons, has willingly agreed to assist, and has promised to prevent such pilgrims landing surreptitiously from dhows on the coast, as well as to concentrate all disembarkation from Sudanese ports on Jeddah. The Nigerians and Sudanese who take this route are notoriously impecunious, and are not really welcome in a country which is only slightly better provided than they are.

24. Up to the present, under the Saudian régime, the duty and privilege of leading the prayers in the Haram at Mecca have fallen to a Wahabi imam. Dispositions are now being taken to broaden this arrangement, which has caused considerable annoyance throughout Islam, and has been a subject of discussion by the committee left behind in the Hejaz by the Islamic Conference. For the future, at each of the five prayers of the day, there will be one Jama'a (session) only, not two or three as heretofore. But there will be five imams, one each for the Hanafi, Shafi'i and Maliki sects, and two for the Wahabi (Hanbali) sect, and these will take duty in turn. The outcome of this will be that worshippers of all the sects of Islam, Wahabis included, will, as occasion dictates, have to pray behind an imam of another sect or miss that particular prayer. This change, in the liberal sense, corresponds with the replacement of the chief imam at Mecca, Sheikh Abdullah-bin-Hassan, the zealot who had an Egyptian chauffeur whipped for smoking, as described in a previous report, and who has left for Medina. His place is taken by an Egyptian sheikh named Abdul Dhar, whose reputation is less fanatic. The latter, at the Friday prayers last week, urged Moslems to forget their sects and to unite.

25. Seven hundred destitute African pilgrims have been repatriated during the month, as have also five slaves.

NORMAN MAYERS.

No. 55.

Sir W. Tyrrell (for the Secretary of State) to Sir R. Graham (Rome).

(No. 291.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Foreign Office, December 11, 1926.

YOUR despatch No. 930 of 4th November: Rome meeting to discuss British and Italian interests in the Red Sea.

Draft instructions for guidance of Sir Gilbert Clayton in proposed discussion of Red Sea questions with Italian authorities have been prepared, and a copy will be sent to you by bag of 13th December.

If you have observations to offer thereon I shall be glad to receive them by telegram.

Your Excellency should now inform Italian Government that His Majesty's Government are ready to meet convenience of Italian Government in beginning conversations, and should enquire date when British delegate should arrive in Rome. If Christmas holidays would entail adjournment of deliberations it would be

preferable that delegate should arrive after the holidays rather than be subjected to detention in Rome. This point, however, I leave to your Excellency's discretion.

I am giving substance of above to Sir Gilbert Clayton, who would, I feel sure be glad to know decision as soon as possible.

[E 6801/3158/91]

No. 56.

Sir G. Clerk to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received December 13.)

(No. 650.)

Sir,

Constantinople, December 8, 1926.

WITH reference to your despatch No. 886 of the 29th October last regarding the Turkish representatives in the Hejaz, I have the honour to draw attention to the remarks which Tewfik Rushdi Bey made to Sir H. Dobbs on this subject (see fourth page of enclosure in my despatch No. 621 of the 24th ultimo). What the Minister then said represents, I think, the greater part of the truth. The Angora Government, as it never wearies of saying, does not to-day bother about Arabs, but is busy trying to put the interior of Turkey in order. To accomplish this, it has, at the risk of alienating many Moslems within Turkey and without, gone in for an internal policy of drastic secularisation. That does not, however, mean that Angora intends to lose all touch with Arab countries. When, if ever, the great task of internal consolidation shall have been achieved, Turkey may make more active use of the sympathy of her Arab co-religionists. For the moment she is content merely to remain in touch, and not unnaturally sends a permanent representative to the centre of Islam—or as near to Mecca as a "modern" Turk finds it expedient to go. But the main reason why the Angora Government is establishing official relations with Ibn Saud is that, as Tewfik Rushdi Bey intimated, he appeals to them as a political force. Mr. Mavers's despatch No. 132 of the 30th October reports the presentation of Suleiman Shevket Bey's credentials. The papers here announce the rumour that Ibn Saud's representative at Angora is to be one Sheikh Arghani.

2. Relations such as Mr. Mayers reports between the Soviet and Turkish representatives are, I think, to be expected. Each will hope to obtain some strength therefrom. The Russian may like appearing as the friend of Turkey. The Turk may like showing his British colleague that he has someone to fall back on. In so far as the Turkish representative's presence has anything to do with the possibility of the ultimate extension of Turkish influence outside the Turkey of to-day, the Russian is interested in seeing this proceed in a pan-Islamic rather than a pan-Turanian direction.

3. I am sending a copy of this despatch to the acting British agent and consul at Jeddah.

I have, &c.

GEORGE R. CLERK.

No. 57.

Sir W. Tyrrell (for the Secretary of State) to Sir R. Graham (Rome).

(No. 295.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Foreign Office, December 13, 1926.

MY telegram No. 291 of 11th December: Red Sea meeting, paragraph 4. Please substitute word "conversations" for "negotiations."

No. 58.

Sir R. Graham to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received December 15.)

(No. 255.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Rome, December 14, 1926.

YOUR telegram No. 255 [? sic: 291].

Ministry for Foreign Affairs informs me that the Governor of Eritrea will probably be recalled for discussions and that consequently they cannot begin until after 1st January.

Exact date will be telegraphed as soon as possible.

No. 59.

Sir Austen Chamberlain to Mr. Jordan (Jeddah).

(No. 83.)

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, December 15, 1926.

FOLLOWING was drafted before receipt of your telegram No. 5 from Medina and is now sent merely for your own information:—

Your telegram No. 4 of 30th November: Right of manumission of slaves.

In view of attitude recently observed by representatives of His Majesty's Government during negotiation of Slavery Convention at September meeting of League of Nations, as well as of strong feeling in this country, His Majesty's Government cannot consider abandonment or restriction of our right of manumission. Nor can they undertake compensation of slave-owners.

Proposal in paragraph 3 of your telegram is therefore unacceptable.

You should impress on Ibn Saud great strength of international feeling attaching to question of slavery, and endeavour to make it clear to him that, while His Majesty's Government fully appreciate both his good intentions and his local difficulties, it is impossible for them to meet his wishes in this matter.

Would it appease him if you were to add at the end of article 7: "until such time as it may be demonstrable that the suppression of slavery and the slave trade in His Majesty's Dominions has rendered obsolete the exercise of this right"?

No. 60.

Mr. Jordan to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received December 19.)

(No. 105.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Jeddah, December 17, 1926.

DURING conversations with Ibn Saud with reference to raids from Trans-Jordania, he complained of the delays in restoration of undisputed loot and displayed marked reluctance to take part in further tribunal proceedings until this loot had been restored. He laid stress on importance of strict and punctual application of the Hadda Agreement, to which he claims to have faithfully adhered. He added that these delays placed him in impossible position with his tribes and seriously impaired his authority. He wished me particularly to request Lord Plumer to hasten restoration of loot taken from his tribes. He made other observations which, not bearing immediately on issue, I am reserving for memorandum on the subject.

I informed Ibn Saud of views and arguments of Palestine authorities as expressed in despatches from Jerusalem and endeavoured to convince him that everything possible had been done to ensure prompt restoration of loot, and succeeded in persuading him to send a delegate to the tribunal. He consented on the understanding that tribunal should sit in Palestine and not in Trans-Jordania, and that restoration of undisputed loot should not be delayed by tribunal proceedings.

I shall submit in due course full memorandum on this subject, and meanwhile am asking Mr. Antonius, who is proceeding to the United Kingdom via Palestine, to acquaint Lord Plumer verbally with facts of the situation.

(Repeated to Jerusalem.)

No. 61.

Sir R. Graham to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received December 20.)

(No. 264.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Rome, December 20, 1926.

MY telegram No. 255.

Italian Government inform me that the Government of Eritrea will represent them in Red Sea conversations, and propose 10th January as the date.

I presume this will be acceptable.

No. 62.

Sir Austen Chamberlain to Sir R. Graham (Rome).

(No. 306.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Foreign Office, December 23, 1926.

YOUR telegram No. 264 of 20th December: Red Sea conversations.

The 10th January is suitable, and Sir G. Clayton will arrive accordingly.

[E 7077/367/91]

No. 63.

Acting Consul Jordan to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received December 28.)

(No. 141.)

Sir,

Jeddah, December 5, 1926.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith my report on the situation in the Hejaz during the period the 1st to the 30th November, 1926.

Copies of this report are being sent to Egypt, Jerusalem (2), Bagdad, Aden, Simla, Beirut (for Damascus), Khartum (through Port Sudan) and Singapore.

I have, &c.

(In the absence of the acting agent and consul),

NORMAN MAYERS.

Enclosure in No. 63.

Jeddah Report for the Period November 1–November 30, 1926.

THE Emir Feisal and his party returned from Europe on the 7th November, having taken a P. and O. steamship from Marseilles to Port Sudan, and been conveyed thence to Jeddah in H.M.S. "Cornflower." The young prince, who is much more confident and at ease in strange company than his elder brother Saud, appeared delighted with all that he had seen and done in Great Britain and Holland. The visit to France does not seem to have been quite so successful, the reception of the party in Paris not perhaps having been as warm as that in the other two capitals.

2. At the banquet which, according to custom, the Jeddah Municipality gave for the prince, Sheikh Yussef Yassin, Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, recapitulated the purposes for which the Emir's journey had been undertaken. He said that it was the policy of Ibn Saud's Government to keep on friendly terms with all the nations interested in the pilgrimage, Moslem and non-Moslem alike. It was the duty and the intention of the Hejaz to facilitate the pilgrimage and to look after the welfare of pilgrims, and he hoped that the foreign Governments concerned would help the Hejaz to accomplish that purpose.

3. A few days later the Emir Feisal and Dr. Abdullah Bey Damlugi, Minister for Foreign Affairs, left Jeddah for Medina, where they joined the King. Some time afterwards Mr. Jordan, accompanied by Mr. Antonius, also left for the vicinity of Medina, Mr. Jordan's mission being to treat with Ibn Saud on the question of a new pact of friendship to replace that signed in 1916 between Ibn Saud and His Majesty's Government. Medina is, of course, closed to non-Moslems, and negotiations, which opened about the 24th November, are taking place in camp at Ghazal.

4. Conjectures as to what these conversations portend are many and various. The most popular report is that a loan of a quarter of a million sterling has been arranged in Great Britain, for which the Hejaz posts, telegraphs, customs and quarantine will be handed over as security.

5. During the period under review there has been nothing to indicate a material change in relations between Ibn Saud and the Imam Yahya of the Yemen as described in the last Jeddah report. Another factor, however, which is worthy of attention as bearing on the situation, is that Ibn Saud, remembering the relations which existed between the late Idrisi Sayyid Mohammed and the British Government during the Great War, may be inclined to hope that the Idrisi at present ruling over Asia is not without friends in the outside world.

6. It would appear that the activities of Zaky Pasha (see paragraph 2 of the October report) are not yet at an end. In an article in the official "Umm-el-Kura"

he writes that Ibn Saud has examined the proposals which he, Zaky Pasha, brought from the Yemen, and has made counter-suggestions, in addition to expressing a general desire for peace and a removal of misunderstandings between himself and the Imam. Zaky Pasha goes on to say that he will resume his mission towards the end of the year. It may be possible that both rulers are not unwilling in this way to continue an exchange of views; but the comments one usually hears as to the value of the old Pasha's intervention are distinctly irreverent.

7. Full information has now been received from Palestine of the events which led to the break-up of the Nejd-Transjordan Conference held at Ma'an to discuss affairs arising out of inter-tribal raids. The failure of the meeting appears to have been the result chiefly of the preposterous and swashbuckling behaviour of the two Nejdis who accompanied Ibn Saud's envoy. Their ignorance of the ordinary rules of pleading made formal proceedings impossible. When a hint as to their behaviour was conveyed to Sheikh Yussef Yassin, he said: "Yes, but after breaking up, why didn't they meet again next day? We had several final ruptures when we were treating with Sir Gilbert Clayton at Hadda."

8. However, after hearing both sides of the question, Ibn Saud is now more reasonably inclined. The matter stands for the present, at His Majesty's suggestion, that the loot which indisputably belongs to Nedjian subjects should be forthwith returned. As for the rest of the property in litigation, he is willing to send his representative up to Palestine again to treat with the authorities there. This disposition of his is all to the good. He was inclined at one time to lose faith in the more peaceful methods of settling inter-tribal depredations.

9. Not much is known in Jeddah of what Ibn Saud is doing in Medina. On the one hand, it is reported that Sheikh Abdullah-bin-Bilehid, Grand Kadhi of Mecca, and Sheikh Abdullah-bin-Hassan (see paragraph 24 of the October report), both of whom are renowned for their reforming zeal, have accompanied the King on his visit, and will proceed to purge Medina, as they have purged Mecca. No doubt Mr. Jordan, on his return from the neighbourhood of Medina, will better be able to report on these matters than I am, in view of the exaggeration which distance lends to news in this country. On the other hand, the King's Nejdian followers are said to be criticising what they consider to be Ibn Saud's own fall from grace. They see motor-cars and telephones in Mecca, and the King sitting down at Jeddah to meat with the infidel, and they ask, not very logically, what has become of the simple austerity of old times. It is generally considered now that Ibn Saud will try to get in a visit to Hail and Riyadh before Ramadhan if possible, in order to be again among his own people and to reassure them.

10. The "Hejaz Conference" held recently in Lucknow under the auspices of the Khuddam-al-Haramain, which ended by voting resolutions inimical to Ibn Saud, has been elaborately attacked in the official newspaper, the "Umm-el-Kura." A telegram is copied from the Egyptian press, purporting to come from Sheikh Ismail-al-Ghaznavi, who was present at the Islamic Conference at Mecca as a delegate of the Ulema-al-Hadith Association of India, and stating that none of the important Moslem societies in India, such as the Central Caliphate Committee, the Indian Ulema Association, the Ahl-al-Hadith and the Himayat-al-Islam were represented, nor did learned institutions, such as the Aligarh University, send delegates. The Ali brothers took part, but in a private capacity.

11. The inspired writer goes on to say that the conference decided to discourage the pilgrimage to the Hejaz until the present régime should come to an end, and asks whether this interference with a purely religious duty is more worthy of servants of the Haramain or of enemies of the Haramain. As for the delegate who claimed the help of the British Government in deposing Ibn Saud, the writer treats him with contempt. The weapon with which a true believer should fight, he says, is the Koran, and the rest is vanity.

12. Once again the distracting dilemma presents itself. The puritan influences behind Ibn Saud cry out to him to maintain at all costs the rigid simplicity of his convictions, and to cleanse the Holy Places of Islam of the accumulated cobwebs of centuries. But the statesman in the King reminds him that a successful pilgrimage is an economic necessity of the Hejaz, which must be made to pay its way.

12A. One cannot imagine that Ibn Saud, however true he may be to his own profession of faith, is the sort of man who will allow mere fanaticism to obstruct his progress. He has not the aspect of a stiff-necked doctrinaire, nor that of a theoretician who will pursue his theory until it turns and destroys him. The trouble is that his history, together with the measures his Wahabi advisers have led him

to adopt since his occupation of the Hejaz, in a sense imprison him. For example, since his journey to Medina, it has been widely reported that he has destroyed the well and palm trees, revered because of their legendary association with the Prophet, in the Haram at Medina, and demolished the brass and iron screen round the Prophet's tomb. I am now told that the report is untrue, and that the source of the rumour is the King's order that a wooden shelter or pavilion, erected some sixty or seventy years ago only by Fakhry Pasha over the well, has been removed as restricting the space available within the Haram. This measure, an ordinary administrative proceeding which would have passed unnoticed under another dispensation, with Ibn Saud is called iconoclasm, and may travel to the far ends of the Islamic world as an example of his intolerance. Only the lapse of time will give Ibn Saud a fair hearing on these matters of Islamic practice, and in that same lapse of time it is almost certain that Ibn Saud will himself give proof of a considerable adaptability.

13. It was noted in the Jeddah report for August, paragraph 13, that the Soviet diplomatic agency in Jeddah had become simply a consulate-general. Such indeed was the general impression in Jeddah for some time, though it was difficult to see the political utility of the change from the Soviet point of view. However, the Russian representative has now reaffirmed himself as agent and consul-general. Perhaps there was something financial or personal in the temporary eclipse. M. Khakimoff has even gone to the extent lately of showing an interest in the place assigned to him in our local order of precedence, encouraged, presumably, by the Turkish Minister. He is a keen little man and a convinced Communist. I should say that his energies are chiefly devoted to making friends for himself (and his political system) in the Hejaz; to conversing with the various agitators who come to Mecca; and to studying organised Islam as a vehicle for propaganda against Western Europe and its empires.

14. Little has been heard lately of the new nationality law controversy. A corollary has been published warning persons, who are improperly, from the point of view of the law, in possession of foreign passports, that it will not be possible to make any exception in their favour. The authorities in Jeddah have been applying the new provisions with vigour. A number of Hejaz passports presented at this agency for visas for India were found to have been given to Indian-born subjects on the strength of their stay in, or family connections with, the Hejaz. It was pointed out to the Governor of Jeddah that it was impossible to accept these documents, and that a young man born in India of Indian parents had a right to a British passport even although his uncle was a pilgrims' agent in Mecca and has accepted Hejaz papers. The Governor is very jealous of his duties under the new law, but he saw the reasonableness of the objection. He, however, brought back recently from Yambo, under arrest, an Egyptian travelling by steamer with an Egyptian passport duly issued to him in Egypt, whom he claimed, perhaps rightly, to be a local subject of two generations' standing.

15. Mr. Philby has arrived and settled down to spend another winter in Jeddah. In view of his opinions it is difficult to ask him what his purpose is in the Hejaz, though conceivably it is not so Machiavellian as might be supposed. He knows most of the personalities in Jeddah, and honestly appears to find pleasure in their company. Besides that, Mr. Philby is under the necessity, I imagine, of making a living for himself like other people, and he can hardly be blamed if he tries to capitalise, now that he has no longer any official connection, his knowledge of the Arab world. At present he does very little in the way of business, and says that he is adding a third volume to his "Heart of Arabia." As he does not appear to command much capital, he cannot enter into the ordinary commercial traffic of Jeddah. It can only be inferred that he is interested in concessions.

16. The most obvious concession at the moment is the proposed Jeddah-Mecca-Arafat-Muna Railway. It will be remembered that at the recent Islamic Conference at Mecca, it was decided that this railway should have serious consideration, and that it should be built as a Moslem wakf with funds collected in all the Islamic countries. But more enterprising spirits in Jeddah consider that the Greek calends are as near as a railway built on those lines, and two important persons in the town have, quite gratuitously, impressed on me their own conviction that the concession should be put into British hands. The trading community in Jeddah, who practically alone count financially in the Hejaz, would be the first to benefit by such a railway, and therefore care little who undertakes its construction, provided it is there to facilitate and increase trade and pilgrim traffic. The railway is therefore the

concession which occurs most readily to the imagination as an undertaking in which Mr. Philby may interest himself. The future will show if this is the line he will take, or if he has other projects in view. He has something to work on in his knowledge of Arabic and his friendship with the King; but he has not yet proved that he is as much an organiser as a scholar, or that after he has wrecked his political career he will be able to build a new future for himself in trade.

17. Indeed, considering the success which has attended the inauguration of the Syria-Iraq motor route, one is entitled to ask whether future travelling between Jeddah and Mecca will not develop on the lines of motor transport, thus forestalling a railway. The 50 miles which separates the two cities cannot be more difficult to traverse than any stretch of 50 miles between Damascus and Bagdad. In fact, cars are being imported in increasing numbers.

18. The different items of expense, taxation, &c., which pilgrims will incur in the next pilgrimage have now been fixed. Slightly higher charges for the services of the pilgrim agent ("mutawwif") are sanctioned, but the ordinary charges for rent, portage, &c., at Jeddah remain much the same. The special fee paid at Mecca by Indian pilgrims has been raised from 26 rupees 8 annas, to 36 rupees 8 annas.

19. The Netherlands Trading Company, of Amsterdam, recently opened a branch office in Jeddah, with the principal object of facilitating the negotiation of letters of credit and performing exchange operations for Javanese and other pilgrims arriving in the Hejaz. They have imported £20,000 in gold from the Bank of England for the purpose. Their work may of course in time develop into ordinary banking activities, although such is not at present their profession. The "Arabian National Bank of the Hejaz," the Lutfallah concern which obtained a concession from King Hussein, also appears to be functioning modestly in a corner of Jeddah. A cheque for 35 piastres was presented for payment the other day to the bank, and to the general surprise was promptly honoured.

20. A commercial court has been instituted in Jeddah under a Government decree. It consists of a president and seven members, of whom four are local subjects and three are foreigners, viz., one Syrian, one Indian and one Dutchman established in trade in Jeddah. All are naturally Moslems. Their duty will be to settle disputes on commercial matters, and a committee is at present sitting to decide what their attributes shall be.

21. During the month 449 destitute African pilgrims have been repatriated, as have also fourteen Indians. In the same period five slaves have been repatriated to Africa.

NORMAN MAYERS.

[E 6916/2660/91]

No. 64.

Sir Austen Chamberlain to Sir G. Clayton.

Sir,

Foreign Office, December 28, 1926.

THIS despatch is intended for your guidance in the discussions in which you will engage with the Italian authorities at Rome regarding British and Italian interests in Southern Arabia and the Red Sea. There is no question of negotiation, and your duty will simply be to act as the mouthpiece of His Majesty's Government in Great Britain for the purpose of a full and frank exchange of views and information with the representatives of the Italian Government. For this purpose I am content to leave to your discretion the method of expounding the position of His Majesty's Government, of meeting any Italian criticisms thereof and of inviting an equally frank expression of Italian views and policy. In this you will be guided by the advice of His Majesty's Ambassador, to whom you will communicate a copy of this despatch.

2. You should at the outset explain that the purpose of your mission is, in accordance with the suggestion contained in the Italian Embassy's note of the 4th October, to promote general political co-operation between the two countries by a frank exchange of explanations and views regarding British and Italian interests in the area of the Red Sea. You may, if you think it necessary, make it clear that there is no question of, or necessity for, any formal agreement, though an agreed summary of the results of your discussions should be placed on record.

3. As soon as opportunity offers, you will explain to the Italian experts the

principles inspiring the policy of His Majesty's Government and the facts of the present situation, as set forth in the following paragraphs.

4. The guiding principle of British policy in the Red Sea is the security of Imperial communications with India and the East. For this purpose His Majesty's Government regard it as a vital Imperial interest that no European Power should establish itself on the Arabian shore of the Red Sea, and more particularly on Kamaran or the Farsan Islands.

5. Apart from the safeguarding of this principle, His Majesty's Government have no political ambitions and they are in favour of equality of commercial opportunity throughout the Red Sea area. British firms have for many years past been endeavouring to obtain from the Idrisi concessions in the Farsan Islands and elsewhere, and one such firm has recently concluded with the present Idrisi an agreement in regard to the Farsan Islands. His Majesty's Government have extended such support as they properly could impartially to the various competing firms.

6. The policy of His Majesty's Government towards the Arab rulers and peoples is one of friendship and good relations, although, for reasons to be stated hereafter, this is unfortunately not always possible.

7. So much for the principles involved. It is now necessary to consider the present situation as determined by the aspirations of the three chief Arab rulers, the Imam of the Yemen, the Idrisi of Asir, and Ibn Saud, King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd and its Dependencies.

8. The relations between His Majesty's Government in Great Britain and the Imam are of a peculiar nature. He is in occupation of portions of the Aden Protectorate and has asserted a claim to the greater part, if not all, of the remainder of the Protectorate. Attempts to come to a settlement with him on this issue have failed. At the same time he professes a genuine desire for a peaceful settlement with His Majesty's Government, and this is heartily reciprocated by them.

9. His Majesty's Government are not unhopful of reaching a settlement with him, and it is not impossible that the local Italian authorities may be able, by their counsels to the Imam, to contribute to this end.

10. Failing some agreement and in the event of further encroachments into the Protectorate, or an attempted occupation of Kamaran or the Farsan Islands, His Majesty's Government may find themselves reluctantly obliged to take active measures against him—a contingency that may come up for consideration at any moment.

11. The Idrisi of Asir appears to be a weakening power and influence in the Arabian Peninsula. By a treaty concluded with the Idrisi during the war His Majesty's Government undertook to protect his seaboard and the Farsan Islands from hostile action. But they have not considered, and do not consider, this engagement as requiring them to assist him in hostilities with another Arabian ruler. They have, therefore, adopted an attitude of neutrality towards the conflict between the Imam and the Idrisi. This attitude is, however, subject to modification in practice, if not in principle, in the event of the conflict developing in such a way as to threaten an occupation of Kamaran or the Farsan Islands by the Imam.

12. It seems likely that the Idrisi realises his inability to stand alone and that he is consequently contemplating some degree of subjection to either the Imam or Ibn Saud. It further appears that he is inclining towards the latter course and it is possible that Ibn Saud may be prepared to intervene on his behalf in the event of further invasion of his territory by the Imam.

13. There have recently been many and contradictory rumours of impending attacks by the Imam on the Idrisi and by the Idrisi on the Imam, and therein lies the possible though remote danger, referred to by His Majesty's Government in their original memorandum, of a conflict between British and Italian interests owing to the personalities of these two Arab rulers.

14. This danger might be intensified in the event of the subjection of the Idrisi to Ibn Saud and of hostilities between the latter and the Imam. The relations of His Majesty's Government with Ibn Saud are most cordial and they are at present engaged, at his request, in negotiations for the revision of their treaty with him. They have, however, neither the intention, nor indeed the power, of foretelling or influencing his attitude in Arabian politics. Apart from this it is their desire to co-operate with him in every way in the pursuance of their common interests.

15. You will understand from the above that the cardinal interest of His Majesty's Government in the Red Sea is the maintenance of the safety of Aden and of Imperial communications with the East. This interest would be threatened by the establishment by any European Power of a base on the Arabian shore of the Red Sea or at Kamaran or the Farsan Islands; it would similarly be menaced by the occupation of Kamaran or the Farsan Islands by an unfriendly Arab ruler.

16. His Majesty's Government understand Italian aims and interests in the Red Sea, and particularly in the Yemen, to be of a commercial and economic and not political nature. This impression is borne out by the text of the Italian treaty with the Imam.

17. I am convinced that the interests of both countries can be promoted, in the Red Sea as elsewhere, by frank and frequent consultation. Any possibility of a conflict of interests can thereby be averted from the outset, and co-operation, where called for, will result in mutual benefits to both parties as well as in advantage to the Arab rulers and peoples.

I am, &c.

AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN.

CHAPTER II.—SYRIA.

[E 4110/12/89]

No. 65.

Acting Consul Vaughan-Russell to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received July 7.)

(No. 205.)

Sir,

Damascus, June 25, 1926.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 200 of the 16th instant, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of the reply received by me from General Vallier relative to the protection of British Indians living in the village of Beit Sawa.

2. General Vallier does not reply to my enquiry as to how the British Indian subjects in Beit Sawa are to be withdrawn from the danger zone, but confines his reply to describing the measures which the above-mentioned Indians should take to co-operate with the French military authorities with a view to ensuring the safety of their lives and property.

3. The French military authorities do not envisage the withdrawal of these subjects from the danger zone; neither do they give guarantees that the village will not be bombarded in the future. For that reason General Vallier's letter is quite worthless, as it fails to do more than give vague assurances that the French military authorities are well-disposed at the present moment towards the village of Beit Sawa. The future immunity of the village is by no means assured. The fact that the French authorities are prepared to allow the presence in the Ghouta danger zone of British subjects who are admittedly not rebels, in the face of my enquiry as to what steps should be taken for their evacuation from that zone, would seem to render them (the French authorities) responsible for any loss of life, as well as property, which our nationals may suffer in the future. I have not replied to the French Envoy Extraordinary in that sense, but I would be grateful to know if this view is reasonable and correct, and, if so, whether you consider it advisable to inform the French authorities accordingly.

4. I have caused the enclosed letter from General Vallier to be carefully translated into Arabic and to be conveyed to the British Indian subjects in Beit Sawa with a short covering notice from me. This notice, copy of which I have the honour to enclose, has also been translated into Arabic for the convenience of the Indians in that village, who speak and read only Arabic.

5. As requested by General Vallier in the last paragraph of his letter, I have requested the Mukhtar of Beit Sawa, together with the leading British Indian subject of that village, to see the officer in charge of the 2nd Bureau of the general headquarters here. I am not certain that the French authorities are entitled to give instructions to British Indians concerning the ways and means they should adopt to defend their lives and property. The responsibility for ensuring the safety of foreigners rests unquestionably upon the mandatory authorities, who should themselves, in my opinion, take the necessary measures to defend foreigners rather than make the foreigners defend themselves, as General Vallier's plan would seem to be. Serious dangers may confront British subjects if they are introduced into the conflict as combatants.

6. It would seem a delicate matter to represent to the French authorities here the above principle, as it is evident that they are quite unable to act up to it. Beit Sawa, being about 7 miles east of Damascus, no French or irregular troops seem able, at present, to venture anywhere near it. At the same time, I am of opinion that strong representations on the matter ought to be made.

7. I should be grateful for instructions as to whether I should make such representations to the French authorities, whilst pointing out that British subjects cannot be called upon to take any part whatever in the campaign against the rebels.

(Copy of this despatch has been sent to Beirut (No. 192)).

I have, &c.

J. R. VAUGHAN-RUSSELL.

P.S.—June 26.—Since copying this despatch, I learn from the British Indian who visited the French 2nd Bureau yesterday, the 25th instant, that the French officer tried to force him to make one or two journeys every week to Beit Sawa to obtain information as to the whereabouts of the rebels in the Ghouta. In other words, he tried to make

use of him as a spy. The Indian explained that this was impossible in view of the dangers attending persons who traversed the Ghouta nowadays. The French officer replied that if he made a detour and followed a certain route there would be no danger, to which the Indian retorted that, if he did such a thing, the rebels might soon find out what his journeys to Beit Sawa were for and kill him and his relatives in Beit Sawa. To this the French officer replied that he could easily at any moment—now, if necessary—order the village of Beit Sawa to be bombarded. After this intimidating remark, the Indian said that, much as he wished to do all he could in his power to assist, he did not feel it possible to run the risks which he was being called upon to run. The officer insisted that he should go once a week, threatening him and the village with disaster if he refused. In view of the unpleasant situation in which he was being placed, the Indian found it difficult to refuse point-blank. At the same time, he did not accept the proposal, but left the matter open.

I propose calling at the French military headquarters and obtaining a few details concerning this affair. I will, in the event of the matter becoming more serious, make a further report on it in due course.

J. R. V.-R.

Enclosure 1 in No. 65.

M. Pierre-Alype to Acting Consul Vaughan-Russell.

Damas, le 25 juin 1926.

M. le Consul,

COMME suite à ma lettre du 17 de ce mois, j'ai l'honneur de vous transmettre ci-jointe la réponse que, sous mon couvert, vous adresse M. le Général Vallier.

Veuillez, &c.

PIERRE-ALYPE.

Enclosure 2 in No. 65.

General Vallier to Acting Consul Vaughan-Russell.

Damas, le 22 juin 1926.

M. le Consul,

J'AI l'honneur de vous accuser réception de votre lettre en date du 15 juin que M. l'Envoyé extraordinaire du Haut-Commissaire a bien voulu me faire parvenir par lettre du 17 juin 1926.

Le sort des ressortissants britanniques du village de Beit-Saoua n'a pas manqué d'attirer toute mon attention bienveillante.

Je puis donc vous assurer qu'aucun tir d'artillerie systématique n'est actuellement envisagé sur cette localité.

Il n'en reste pas moins vrai que la présence de bandes dans Beit-Saoua ou à ses abords pourrait m'amener à déclencher des tirs de représailles ou d'interdiction qui dans tous les cas ne pourraient revêtir qu'un caractère inopiné.

Enfin, dans l'hypothèse où nos troupes seraient appelées à opérer dans cette région, j'ai l'honneur de vous prier de bien vouloir préconiser aux familles de vos protégés d'avoir à adopter la ligne de conduite suivante :

- (a.) Ne pas abandonner le village ;
- (b.) S'y grouper dans quelques maisons aux abords de la mosquée ;
- (c.) Envoyer une délégation munie d'un drapeau blanc au-devant du commandant des troupes.

Eu égard aux dispositions ainsi prises en faveur de vos ressortissants, je vous serais par contre reconnaissant de bien vouloir les inviter à se présenter ainsi que leur mukhtar au 2^e Bureau de mon État-Major afin d'y recevoir des instructions concernant la défense propre de leur village contre les bandes.

Veuillez, &c.

VALLIER.

Enclosure 3 in No. 65.

Notice.

THE attached translation of a letter received by me from the French authorities in Damascus is brought to the notice of British subjects residing at Beit Sawa, who are hereby requested to note carefully the action which they should take to co-operate with the mandatory authorities to ensure the safeguarding of their lives and property in the event of military operations in and around Beit Sawa.

J. R. VAUGHAN-RUSSELL,
His Majesty's Acting Consul.

Damascus, June 26, 1926.

[E 4112/12/89]

No. 66.

Acting Consul Vaughan-Russell to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received July 7.)

(No. 207.)

Sir,

Damascus, June 28, 1926.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 205 of the 25th instant, I have the honour to transmit herewith a memorandum reporting the gist of my interview to-day with Lieutenant Dejour, the officer in charge of the Second Bureau of the French headquarters here.

2. As will be seen from a perusal of the above memorandum, Lieutenant Dejour strongly urged that in return for the consideration with which the French military authorities had treated the Beit Sawa Indians, the latter should carry out espionage work for them.

3. I have ventured to report my interview in some detail for purposes of record. Although the proposals of the French military authorities deserved to be definitely vetoed, I did not deny categorically the French authorities' right to request these "services" from our British Indians. I felt that too strong opposition on my part might have provoked the omnipotent and reckless French military authorities to carry out a bombardment which can now be justified in view of the proclamation announcing the Ghouta to be a danger zone. By temporising and arguing as I did, I think that this danger, if not removed, has been at least averted for some time. I trust that the action taken is approved.

I have, &c.

J. R. VAUGHAN-RUSSELL.

Enclosure in No. 66.

Memorandum.

I POINTED out that the British Indian who had seen Lieutenant Dejour on the evening of the 25th instant did not seem very clear as to what was expected of him, and asked Lieutenant Dejour to be good enough to let me know what he desired of the Beit Sawa Indians. He was very frank and unequivocal, and said that he had asked that one of the Indians coming to Damascus from Beit Sawa should visit him every week and give him news of what was going on at Beit Sawa and in the Ghouta generally.

2. I remarked that there were obvious considerations and obstacles which made it impossible for the Beit Sawa Indians to conform to his desires, and said that I had consistently urged Indians to preserve a strict neutrality in the Syrian rebellion. Apart from the risks which he was asking these Indians to take by going to Beit Sawa and returning to Damascus, he would be exposing their families and their homes to reprisals from rebels, who would revenge themselves upon the Indians if they discovered what the objects of their visits to Beit Sawa were.

3. The lieutenant replied that, according to information received by the French military authorities, rebels had made use of Beit Sawa as a base, and for that reason he attached great importance to obtaining information regarding the movements of

rebels from persons in that neighbourhood. He said that these Indians would not find the journey between Beit Sawa and Damascus dangerous if they made a wide detour, and that, in his opinion, the risk of the rebels learning of their visits to him was practically nil. He ended by alluding to the consideration shown by the French authorities toward these Indians and their village, and hoped that I would agree with him that, in return for this consideration and the immunity enjoyed by the village, he might expect these Indians to render to him some small services. He added that I could count on him to do all that was possible to spare the village from bombardments, and repeated that, in return for the consideration shown to these Indians, they should do him these little services from time to time.

4. I replied that in principle I could not agree to his proposals in view of the grave issues they raised, and added that I had urged the British Indians in Beit Sawa not to stay in their village but to come into Damascus. If they stayed there I warned them that they should not risk themselves by traversing the Ghouta. For that reason I was of opinion that it would be only at rare intervals that any of them came to Damascus. I concluded by saying that I would urge such Indians as went to Beit Sawa to use the "safe" route suggested by him, but that he must not count upon them to provide him with information. He again urged that the Indians should do him these little services, and concluded by saying: "Je compte sur vous et vous pouvez compter sur moi." to which I replied, "Il ne faut pas trop compter."

J. R. VAUGHAN-RUSSELL.

[E 4249/12/89]

No. 67.

Acting Consul Vaughan-Russell to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received July 15.)

(No. 208.)

Sir,

Damascus, June 30, 1926.

I HAVE the honour to submit a report upon the developments of the past three months and on the present general situation in Syria and the Damascus consular district in particular.

2. During the period under review many events have taken place, and an important phase in the suppression of the Syrian rebellion by the French authorities has been reached. Early in April the mandatory authorities were still obliged to maintain a defensive policy as the necessary reinforcements for the spring offensive had not at that time arrived. It had been hoped, no doubt, that the policy of attrition carried out during the autumn and winter would drive the rebels into submission and thus obviate the necessity of a spring campaign. This hope having proved false, reinforcements were quickly collected in Syria during the end of March and early in April, and the offensive planned beforehand was immediately carried out.

3. By early in April, French columns from Homs (largely composed of irregular auxiliaries) had cleared the Nebk region (see my despatch No. 119 of the 1st April last). Following upon this the French cleared the Wadi-el-Ajam (Mount Hermon) zone and drove the rebels into a corner (the Jebel Druse), hoping to localise the rebellion and to simplify thereby its suppression by military means.

4. Immediately afterwards the attack upon the Jebel Druse, and the successful capture of Sueida (and later on of Salkhad) took place, followed by the reoccupation of the northern, western and southern districts of the rebel Druse country. This undoubted French success in the Jebel Druse brought the wavering Leja bedouins (Haurani) to the side of the French, and produced a comfortable feeling of security in the minds of the military authorities in the Jebel Druse by the knowledge that communications with the base, Damascus, via the Hauran were safer than ever before from Druse or Syrian rebels' attacks (see paragraph 4 of my despatch No. 185 of the 2nd instant).

5. Closely following upon these French military successes, M. de Jouvenel seized what appeared at the time the psychological moment to offer peace terms to the Syrian rebels. He appointed a new Syrian President, who in turn created a new Syrian native Government. The new President, Damad Ahmed Nami Bey, was, at the time of his appointment, supposed to have been given by the French High Commissioner unlimited powers. He was *persona grata* with the French authorities, and the latter had agreed that he should accept the collaboration of Ministers who were Nationalist extremists (and therefore sympathisers of the Syrian rebels). For

this reason, it was thought that his Syrian Government was bound to succeed in restoring peace, particularly as the French High Commissioner had announced that the ministerial programme of the new Syrian Government was accepted as a basis upon which the mandatory authorities could negotiate on the question of peace and of the future status of Syria.

6. The new Syrian Government on its formation endeavoured to put into execution the ten points of its programme, but it soon became evident that this programme could not be carried out because the French authorities insisted on modifying it. M. de Jouvenel made vague promises regarding a general amnesty, but this amnesty was dependent upon the laying down of their arms by the rebels unconditionally. In consequence, the rebels signified their intentions of not surrendering by carrying out demonstrations and attacks on French military posts outside and around Damascus.

7. M. de Jouvenel's peace plans did not work out quite so easily as he may have thought they would, and in plain language they proved unsuccessful. Indeed, there was little chance of their being carried through with success, as indications point to the fact that there was too much political manoeuvring in M. de Jouvenel's much-advertised peace campaign and too little sincere effort at genuine collaboration with responsible Syrians to restore peace on a reasonable and equitable basis and at forming a Syrian Government that represented Syrian feeling.

8. The Syrian native Government soon lost what confidence the Syrian population had ever reposed in it, by the fact that it showed itself powerless to bring pressure upon the rebels to surrender, or upon the French military authorities to modify their ruthless methods of warfare. The rebels, who would have preferred any peace which held out a promise that their aspirations would be borne in mind, soon decided to continue to fight, and reformed themselves in the Ghouta and in the anti-Lebanon.

9. Having obtained the adhesion of the Syrian Government to their policy of ruthless warfare against the rebels (who were always stigmatised as bandits and brigands), the French authorities proceeded during the early part of June to intensify their bombardments upon the villages around Damascus, chiefly those in the oasis east of the city, known as the Ghouta and the Merj. On this occasion they covered themselves against the reproaches previously made against them (that prior warning of bombardment had not been given), and proclaimed the Ghouta a danger zone. For the past three weeks, shells and bombs have been rained upon the foregoing villages, and much damage must have been done. Apart from these ruthless measures, French and irregular troops have made sorties from Damascus, burning houses and crops and killing many villagers in the gardens around the city. There is reason to believe that many of these sorties have resulted in doing infinitely more harm to innocent peasants than to rebels or brigands.

10. The situation in and around Damascus is, then, very similar to what it was last December, before the French military posts were sent out to occupy a ring of strong posts in the Ghouta. These posts were withdrawn some weeks ago when it was found that they were so ineffective, that they were always becoming isolated, and that their revictualling and relief presented such dangers and difficulties. The city is, in fact, practically beleaguered, for nobody (the French not excepted) dare enter or leave Damascus except by rail.

11. The railways are, of course, closely guarded; I am informed, however, that the villagers guarding the railways (who are enrolled and paid by the French military authorities), allot to the rebels a share of their pay and thus secure immunity from being attacked. The result is that everybody is satisfied—the French, because railway communications are kept uninterrupted, the villagers, because they receive pay and run little risk, and the rebels because they obtain funds by a peaceful and easy method.

12. The roads around Damascus are still unsafe, and the French only use them when they send out strong bodies of troops north-eastwards or south-westwards. Private individuals at rare intervals run the gauntlet and motor from Damascus to Beirut. A few native cars run fairly regularly to villages near the north-east and the south-west roads out of the city, but it is still a perilous adventure to use all roads to and from Damascus.

13. The following are notes upon the situation in the different areas comprising this consular district. The Wadi-el-Ajam district (east of Mount Hermon), has been overrun by rebels and by columns of French and irregular troops for the past nine months. To complete the destruction done, many Christian villages have been

attacked, looted and partially destroyed by neighbouring Moslem and Druse villagers. Order is supposed to have been restored there since the middle of April, but the inhabitants from the Wadi-el-Ajam, who are refugees in Damascus, appear to have little confidence in the declarations repeatedly made by the Government that all is safe and that they can return in safety to their villages. Many of them are still awaiting more settled conditions before they venture to return; they seem to mistrust the state of order there which they know is the result of a military occupation of the district by troops largely composed of Circassian irregulars.

14. The Kuneitra and Nebk districts are in a state very similar to that in the Wadi-el-Ajam. Communications with Kuneitra and Nebk by road from Damascus are precarious and dangerous and many people from here reach Kuneitra by rail via Palestine, and Nebk via Rayak and Homs. Although these areas are in the military control of the French military authorities, and the rebels who were there have been driven out, the state of security is such as to make most people very nervous about going there. Nebk, in particular, has been threatened by the rebels on several occasions since the French occupied that district last March (see my despatch No. 119 of the 1st April last). The whole of this region and the eastern slopes of the anti-Lebanon are still far from safe and settled, and French control there is only partial.

15. The Homs and Hama regions during the period under review have been fairly calm. It is noteworthy, however, that there has recently been a certain amount of effervescence there, particularly in the neighbourhood of Homs. Bands of brigands, no doubt similar in character to those which have recently made their appearance in the Lebanon, have sprung up and attacked villages and French posts, but have been dispersed. The security in the above districts has never been seriously compromised—corroboration of which is found in the fact that the trans-desert convoys passing through Homs to Palmyra and Irak, and *vice versa*, have not been interfered with.

16. In paragraph 4 of this despatch, I referred to the recapture of the Jebel Druse and the consequent strengthening of the French control in the Hauran. To complete the review of the present situation throughout this consular district it would seem necessary to allude very briefly to the present situation in the Hauran and the Jebel Druse. As regards the Hauran, it is only necessary to say that the imposing concentrations of French troops and military equipment in that area have almost completely restored peace and security there. The Jebel Druse is slowly being reoccupied, and French reports state that numerous villages have surrendered, that the country is nearly entirely once more in French control, and that the Druses as a people have practically surrendered, and rebel Druses are slowly trickling back to their villages. The French say that only Sultan Pasha Attrash and a band of die-hard supporters remain to be rounded up in the eastern wilds of the Jebel Druse, that their numbers are steadily diminishing, and their influence over the rest of the Jebel Druse in fast waning, and that the capture of this eastern region and of the rebel Druses is only a matter of time.

17. In conclusion, it can be summed up that the only areas where the rebels have any appreciable direct influence or are making any military opposition to the mandatory authorities are the regions around Damascus and the anti-Lebanon and Nebk districts. This does not mean that the population of the rest of Syria is rejoicing in the benefits of peace, prosperity and security, and that Syrians as a whole are satisfied with the French mandate, and regard the rebels' activities with disfavour. This is far from being the case, for the vast majority of the population of Syria is in sympathy with the rebels, though for various reasons they do not actively support them. One reason is the fairly general pusillanimous character of the Syrian Arabs, but the most important is the mutual distrust which exists among the various denominations in Syria. Owing to this mistrust and jealousy there is a complete absence of any organisation to co-ordinate a rebellious effort against the mandatory authorities—a fortunate fact which should facilitate the French authorities' task of subduing the country.

Copies of this despatch have been sent to Jerusalem (No. 155), Amman (No. 162), Bagdad (No. 145), Beirut (No. 196), and Aleppo (No. 123).

I have, &c.

J. R. VAUGHAN-RUSSELL.

[E 4273/12/89]

No. 68.

Consul-General Satow to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received July 16.)

(No. 140.)

Sir,

Beirut, July 5, 1926.

THE districts outside the Jebel Druse and the Damascus area in which public security is at present most troubled appear for the moment to be the Baalbeck region, certain parts of the Southern Lebanon and the Jebel Akroun, which fringes on the Tripoli district.

2. It is difficult to follow in detail what is happening. Military operations have been taking place in the Baalbeck area in conjunction more or less with operations in the Jebel Akroun. Circassian irregulars have been used in these operations. The bands of Tewfik Haulo Haidar and of Zein Murhi Jaafer appear to be still operating, though the latter has showed signs of wishing to submit on his own terms to which the authorities do not agree. The Haidar family is held to be primarily responsible for the troubled state of the Baalbeck region. Recently, Ibrahim Haidar, Senator, was removed from the Senate by order of the Acting High Commissioner and replaced by a certain Ahmed Husseini.

3. In the Southern Lebanon the trouble is mainly round Rashaya. Near there a battalion of colonial troops were recently surprised on the march and lost fairly heavily. This may be the ambush at Faloudja of which the papers have made mention.

4. Tripoli is always expecting trouble. There are machine guns posted here and there and barbed wire is in evidence. The arrest of four Moslems, of whom one is Abdul Hamid Karamieh, a former Mufti, and their imprisonment at Haabda is announced.

5. Some fresh troops, the 65th Regiment (three battalions) of Tirailleurs marocains, are arriving. They are said to be of better quality than those now here. Including these, there will be 23 infantry battalions and 18 cavalry squadrons and also 27 squadrons of irregular cavalry ("gardes mobiles") in Syria and the Lebanon. Two more new battalions may be sent later.

6. I fancy that there is a lack of co-operation between the civil and military authorities and I have heard it said that General Gamelin looks at things too much from the military standpoint and does not take sufficient account of the political factor. To restore order thoroughly in a short time would take far more troops than will presumably ever be available, and as, even when the Jebel Druse is officially pacified and the situation round Damascus in the Ghouta and elsewhere is cleared up, there will remain numerous potential causes of disorders and trouble scattered about the country, the effective restoration of order everywhere will be a slow and wearisome business.

7. From all accounts, the State of the Alaouites is the one part of the mandated territory where the situation is satisfactory. There appears to be no disorder, and the population is reported to be contented. One Englishman who was recently there described it as a "model State." The French have, of course, had to deal with a somewhat backward population, have employed a system of practically direct administration, and seem as a general rule to have been fortunate in their choice of French officials.

Copies of this despatch have been sent to Bagdad and Jerusalem.

I have, &c.

H. E. SATOW

[E 4351/12/89]

No. 69.

Acting Consul Vaughan-Russell to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received July 21.)

(No. 219.)

Sir,

Damascus, July 12, 1926.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 189 of the 5th ultimo, I have the honour to report that the peace mission of Osman-el-Charabati to the Jebel Druse failed to materialise. Fearing that he might suffer a fate similar to that of his Nationalist friends in the Syrian Cabinet (see Damascus despatch No. 198 of the 14th ultimo), he fled to Palestine and thence to Transjordan as soon as he heard of the arrest and

imprisonment by the French military authorities of the three Ministers in the Syrian Government.

2. The possibility of restoring peace by negotiations has recently been exercising the minds of everybody here. The French authorities, of course, maintain outwardly an uncompromising attitude towards the rebels, as they are now committed to their policy of ending the rebellion by force of arms, and of considering no terms except unconditional surrender. Nevertheless, there are some signs that, as the solution of the Syrian problem by purely military means has not given absolutely satisfactory results, the French authorities are not averse to negotiating for peace by indirect and unofficial methods.

3. Syrians are as heartily sick of the rebellion (with all the ruin it is bringing upon them) as the French authorities, and all sections of the population would welcome peace by negotiation if it could be brought about. Negotiations are said to have actually commenced in the Ghouta between the rebels there and intermediaries from Damascus. I learn also that a serious effort to come to some understanding with the rebels in the Nebk district (north-east of Damascus) is about to be made. Toufic Chamieh, a Damascene notable and a landlord in the Nebk region (where he is understood to have some influence), is reported to have offered his services to the French authorities to assist in bringing about peace in the Nebk district. His proposal is stated to have been accepted by the French authorities, and Commandant Mortier, head of the Damascus Intelligence Service, is understood to be working out with Toufic Chamieh ways and means of putting this plan into execution, prior to their proceeding together to Nebk.

4. It is too early yet to express any opinion as to whether these new efforts at restoring peace will be actively pursued, and, if so, whether they will bear fruit. In the meanwhile, the situation here remains unchanged, and the mandatory authorities are continuing their ruthless policy of terrorism; daily and nightly villages and areas on the outskirts of Damascus, where brigands or rebels are known or suspected to be collected, continue to be subjected to aerial bombardments or to artillery fire.

Copies of this despatch have been sent to Jerusalem (No. 159), Amman (No. 167), Bagdad (No. 148), Beirut (No. 203) and Aleppo (No. 125).

I have, &c.

J. R. VAUGHAN-RUSSELL.

[E 4475/12/89]

No. 70.

Consul Hough to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received July 29.)

(No. 82.)

Sir,

Aleppo, July 15, 1926.

IT is some time since I last had the honour of submitting to you any report on political events in this district. There has in fact been no event of the slightest importance to report. The unrest, which is apparently increasing rather than abating in other parts of Syria, shows at present no signs of spreading to this part of the country.

2. This is undoubtedly a curious phenomenon, and I confess I am unable to furnish a complete explanation. The history of Aleppo shows that at no time has it been affected by currents of political passion which have led to the most disturbing and tragic events in other towns. Aleppo has always been content to carry on its business and let politics slide. It is also true that the vast and dreary steppe in the middle of which it lies offers no temptation to insurgent spirits as a battle-ground. Such disturbances as I have from time to time reported have arisen in the barren and inaccessible mountains south of Harim.

3. It may, however, be added that the prestige of the mandate is down to zero. The local mandatory authorities are, on the whole, liked and respected, but events in the Damascus and Lebanon districts, and the fatal collapse of the franc, have destroyed any affection for the mandatory Power which ever existed.

4. Much was hoped from General Billotte's return. His personal prestige locally is fabulous. Unfortunately he was given a task of such wide-reaching magnitude that Aleppo hardly ever sees him. He has had to concentrate almost entirely on military matters outside this district. At the moment of writing he is away, I believe, engaged in operations near Homs, and has taken all the troops available with him, so that none were available for the usual review on the 14th July. The absence of this review caused a gloomy impression.

[15799]

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5. Public security is, on the whole, good, though there have been two or three outbreaks of highway robbery on the new Antioch road of a daring character, but no political significance.

(Copies of this despatch have been sent to Beirut (No. 80), Damascus (No. 63), Bagdad (No. 71) and Constantinople (No. 35).)

I have, &c.

W. HOUGH.

[E 4702/12/89]

No. 71.

Acting Consul Vaughan-Russell to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received August 11).

(No. 227.)

Sir,

Damascus, July 27, 1926.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 207 of the 28th ultimo, I have the honour to forward herewith copies of letters addressed by me yesterday to the French Envoy Extraordinary and the General Officer Commanding the troops in the Damascus district regarding the safety of the British Indians of the village of Beit Sawa.

2. From a perusal of the enclosed letter addressed to me by Ahmed Abdul Mejid, the Beit Sawa Indian who drew my attention to what had been going on in the neighbourhood of the village, it will be seen that Beit Sawa, while spared the terrors of a bombardment or of an attack by a column of troops on the 20th instant, was fined 80 Turkish gold pounds. If this fine were not paid by this morning the village was to be bombarded.

3. The French took four hostages, among whom there was one British Indian, named Abdulla-bin-Mustafa Aghwani. The four men were called upon to direct the French column by a safe route to a neighbouring village before they were released. Again, on the 24th instant, the above-mentioned Indian, Abdulla Mustafa Aghwani, was seized, with other villagers, and compelled to act as a guide, in spite of his protests that he was a British subject. He was apparently only set free on condition that he betook himself to Beit Sawa and set about collecting money to pay the fine.

4. In view of the urgency of this matter I telephoned to General Vallier yesterday afternoon and requested him to be good enough to suspend punitive measures against Beit Sawa until he received a letter which I was addressing to the French Envoy Extraordinary and to him on the subject. He promised to look into the matter, and a little later an officer telephoned to me that two extra days' grace had been granted to enable the villagers to collect the money for the fine, which was 90 Turkish gold pounds and not 80 pounds. I repeated to this officer the same objections as I had made in my letter to the French Envoy Extraordinary, and he asked me if I would call to-day and discuss with him the whole question. I said I would.

5. Before I saw Lieutenant Déjour—the officer in question—to-day, I heard that the villagers of Beit Sawa had decided to pay the fine and so secure immunity from bombardment. I advised the British Indians of the village to pay their share of the fine—amounting to about 25 Turkish gold pounds—and to let me know the exact amount paid by them.

6. I heard also that Abdulla Mustafa Aghwani, the Indian referred to earlier in paragraph 3, had been seized by the rebels and beaten for having aided the French. He is reported to have been told by some of the rebels that they would attack the village and burn it, as, owing to the fact that it was practically the only one in the Ghouta which was intact, this proved that it was regarded favourably by the French, and that the villagers must have been helping the French against them. As I am quite unable to bring any influence to bear upon the rebels in the Ghouta, I have urged the Indians to pacify them as best they can. I do not think that the threat will be carried into effect, although there is little to prevent the rebels from destroying Beit Sawa if they desire to do so. As the French columns merely pass through the Ghouta and do not remain there to re-establish order and security in that region, it is difficult to appreciate the usefulness or advantage of these short sorties and ruthless punitive expeditions.

7. When I saw Lieutenant Déjour to-day, he told me that more than half the fine had been paid, and adequate guarantees for the remainder had been given. He assured me that now the question of the fine was settled there was no need to fear that Beit Sawa would be bombarded. I showed him a copy of my letter to General Vallier,

and made clear to him my point of view on the question of the responsibility of the mandatory authorities for the safety of the British Indians in Beit Sawa, who, so far from having been assisted by the French authorities from leaving the danger zone, had been encouraged to remain there and been given instructions what to do if columns operated around the village. I also repeated to him my protest that a British Indian should have been used as a guide for the French troops. He professed surprise and assured me once more that, now the fine was paid, Beit Sawa would be left to continue its existence free from danger of bombardment or other punishment.

8. I can only trust that my letters to M. Pierre-Allye and to General Vallier may deter the mandatory authorities from too precipitate coercive measures against Beit Sawa, but in the present mood of the French military authorities I cannot but feel some misgivings for the future of the above village. I presume that no further action can usefully be taken by me at present, and I trust that the terms of my letters to the French authorities are approved.

(Copies of this despatch have been sent to Beirut (No. 208) and Aleppo (No. 127).)

I have, &c.

J. R. VAUGHAN-RUSSELL.

Enclosure 1 in No. 71.

Acting Consul Vaughan-Russell to French Representative at Damascus.

M. l'Envoyé extraordinaire,

Damas, le 26 juillet 1926.

J'AI l'honneur de vous transmettre, sous ce pli, la copie d'une requête que m'a adressée le nommé Ahmad Abdel Majid Aghwani, l'un des sujets britanniques indiens du village de Beit Sawa. Ma sollicitude pour le sort de ces Indiens pendant ces derniers mois m'a obligé de vous adresser plusieurs lettres à ce sujet; la dernière lettre échangée fut la réponse du Général Vallier à ma lettre du 15 juin dernier, adressée à ce consulat sous votre couvert du 25 du mois passé. Dans cette dernière communication, le Général Vallier n'a soulevé aucune objection du fait de la présence de sujets britanniques dans le village de Beit Sawa, dans la zone dangereuse de la Ghouta. Il a même indiqué une ligne de conduite à adopter par mes ressortissants dans le cas où des opérations militaires auraient lieu dans la région du village. Cette ligne de conduite fut adoptée le 20 et le 24 courant lorsque des colonnes de troupes entrèrent dans Beit Sawa. Mon ressortissant déclare que, dans le cas où le village n'aura pas payé l'amende de £ T. 80 or, il sera bombardé demain le 27 courant.

Je ne peux qu'espérer que les déclarations qui figurent dans les paragraphes 4 et 7 de sa lettre soient erronées et que, dans le cas où une amende aurait été imposée sur le village de Beit Sawa et cette amende resterait non payée dans le délai fixé, des mesures pourront être prises pour soustraire les ressortissants britanniques des mesures de coercition qui pourraient devenir nécessaires. Les mesures préindiquées ont été prévues par M. le Général Vallier dans sa lettre du 8 mai dernier, dont copie a été transmise au corps consulaire par votre lettre du 14 mai dernier.

Les autorités mandataires n'ont pas interdit formellement à mes ressortissants de rester dans le village, et la demande que je leur ai adressée dans le dernier paragraphe de ma lettre du 15 juin dernier est restée sans réponse. Il m'a été, donc, impossible de prendre des mesures pour retirer les femmes et les enfants indiens de ce village hors de tout danger possible. Dans ces conditions, je ne pourrai que considérer les autorités mandataires comme responsables pour les pertes de vie et des biens que pourront subir mes ressortissants à Beit Sawa.

Je crois devoir en même temps protester contre l'emploi d'un sujet britannique comme éclaireur pendant les opérations actuelles. Les inconvénients qui en pourraient résulter sont trop évidents pour être indiqués.

Je vous saurais gré de bien vouloir porter d'urgence à la connaissance des autorités militaires françaises les considérations préindiquées pour que tout incident déplorable soit évité dans toute la mesure du possible. Vu l'urgence de la question, j'ai envoyé directement au Général Vallier copie de la présente lettre en le priant d'ajourner les mesures de coercition (s'il y en est question), pendant que cette question sera étudiée à nouveau.

Veuillez, &c.

J. R. VAUGHAN-RUSSELL.

Enclosure 2 in No. 71.

*Ahmed Abdul Mejid to Acting Consul Vaughan-Russell.**Damas, le 26 juillet 1926.*

M. le Consul,

JE soussigné, Ahmad Abdel Majid Aghwani, sujet britannique indien habitant au village de Beit Sawa, ai l'honneur d'exposer à votre haute bienveillance ce qui suit :

2. Le mardi, 20 courant, à 9/10 heures du matin, les troupes françaises avant d'entrer à notre village de Beit Sawa ont tiré des coups de fusil et, voyant que personne n'avait riposté, y ont pénétré et ont informé les habitants que le village de Beit Sawa étant resté fidèle n'aurait pas les mesures de représailles et ne serait pas considéré à supporter les coups de canons et la destruction pareils aux villages révoltés.

3. Les habitants de Beit Sawa furent ensuite informés par le commandant des troupes de ne pas sortir de leur village et quiconque sera vu en dehors du village sera considéré comme l'un des rebelles et sera fusillé.

4. Considérant que le village de Beit Sawa n'a subi aucun dommage de guerre, les habitants ont été appelés à remettre quinze fusils. A leur réponse de ne posséder aucun fusil dans leur village, les habitants ont été taxés de quatre-vingts livres turques or en échange des quinze fusils.

5. Afin de leur montrer la route conduisant au village d'Ourbine, le commandant des troupes a emmené avec lui les nommés Abdallah-bin-Moustafa Aghwani (sujet indien britannique), et trois autres villageois indigènes. Abdallah-bin-Moustafa Aghwani a tout de même montré son passeport et informa le commandant de sa nationalité britannique. Ces considérations n'ont pas trouvé la faveur d'être relâché et le passeport fut gardé par le commandant, qui informa Abdallah qu'il étudierait sa nationalité.

6. De ce fait, il a été contraint de suivre les ordres du commandant et, avec les villageois susindiqués, il a dû partir avec les troupes comme éclaireur jusqu'au village d'Ourbine. De cette localité, sa liberté lui a été accordée de rentrer à Beit Sawa.

7. Samedi passé le 24 courant, des troupes venant du village de Hamoureh ont passé par Beit Sawa. Le commandant a interpellé le même Abdallah-bin-Moustafa Aghwani et autres villageois et leur a demandé qu'est devenue l'indemnité de £ T. 80 or imposée sur le village de Beit Sawa. Ils ont répondu que les routes sont impraticables pour pouvoir écouler leurs produits et obtenir le montant désiré. Le commandant leur a fait finalement comprendre que, si durant ces trois jours l'indemnité ne serait pas payée, leur village serait bombardé et assujéti aux représailles de guerre.

8. Comme la première fois, le même Abdallah-bin-Moustafa Aghwani ainsi que quatre autres villageois de Beit Sawa ont été emmenés à Douma par l'expédition le samedi, 24 courant. Abdallah est rentré le même jour au village, tandis que les quatre villageois indigènes furent conduits vers Damas, où ils ont été emprisonnés. Abdallah a été mis en liberté dans le but de pouvoir recueillir l'indemnité de £ T. 80 or. En outre, il a été avisé de verser le montant ou bien à la délégation ou bien au commandant n'importe où il pourra se trouver, pourvu qu'Abdallah ait en mains le drapeau britannique pour le garantir de toute rencontre fâcheuse.

9. Veuillez noter, M. le consul, que toutes les céréales de mes frères, de toute la famille Aghwani et les miennes se trouvent actuellement dispersées en paquets dans les champs et le commandant en notifiant son intention de bombarder le village nous a fait comprendre que le feu sera aussi mis à ces céréales qui approximativement peuvent être évaluées à 4,000/4,200 mods.

10. En mon nom personnel et au nom de tous les Indiens de Beit Sawa, qui vous sont infiniment reconnaissants, je vous prie de vouloir bien défendre notre cause sacrée et nous mettre sous vos ailes protectrices.

En vous remerciant du fond du cœur pour tout ce que vous faites pour sauvegarder les droits de vos humbles ressortissants, je reste respectueusement, &c.

AHMAD ABDEL MAJID AGHWANI.

Enclosure 3 in No. 71.

Acting Consul Vaughan-Russell to General Vallier.

M. le Général,

Damas, le 26 juillet 1926.

J'AI l'honneur de confirmer ma conversation téléphonique de cet après-midi au sujet de mes nouvelles craintes pour la sécurité des sujets britanniques de Beit Sawa et je vous transmets ci-joint copie d'une lettre que je viens d'adresser aujourd'hui sur la même question à M. l'Envoyé extraordinaire à Damas.

S'il y aurait question d'imposer sur le village de Beit Sawa des mesures de coercition tel qu'un bombardement, je vous serais très reconnaissant de les ajourner, tout en vous priant de bien vouloir étudier à nouveau les considérations que j'ai soulevées dans ma lettre ci-jointe.

Je saisis cette occasion pour vous remercier pour toutes les mesures bienveillantes que vous avez déjà prises pour épargner autant que possible mes ressortissants dans le village de Beit Sawa, et je vous prie d'agréer, &c.

J. R. VAUGHAN-RUSSELL.

[E 4703/12/89]

No. 72.

Acting Consul Vaughan-Russell to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received August 11.)

(No. 228.)

Damascus, Syria, July 27, 1926.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that the French military authorities here carried out a large and comprehensive scheme of surprise military operations around Damascus on the 19th and 20th instant. Large bodies of troops had previously been collected at Zebdani, 40 kilom. north-west of Damascus, and at Mismiyeh, 40 kilom. south of Damascus; the troops at Zebdani imagined that they were destined to operate against Nebk, and those at Mismiyeh were led to understand that they were en route for the Jebel Druse.

2. At a given signal both forces closed in on Damascus, and three columns simultaneously sallied forth from Damascus to attack frontally the rebels in the gardens surrounding the city while the Zebdani and Mismiyeh columns attacked them from the rear. The plan for this attack on the Ghouta appears to have been kept strictly secret, and the element of surprise in the operations must have been an important factor in contributing to the success of the French operations.

3. I will not attempt to describe the military dispositions and how the plan worked out, but will merely confine myself to describing the state of feeling in the city while the fighting was in progress and the apparent results of the foregoing operations.

4. In paragraphs 4 and 5 of my despatch No. 224 of the 24th instant I described how the French authorities suspended all traffic by railway and by road to and from Damascus early on the morning of the 19th instant, and how this suspension of traffic was maintained until about midnight of the 20th-21st instant. Apprehension was felt in the city as a result of these unusual measures, but this feeling was much intensified by the wholesale arrests which were carried out by the French authorities during that day and the succeeding few days. Several hundreds of persons of ages varying from seventy odd to about eleven were arrested. Most of the arrests were among persons entering Damascus from without the barbed-wire circle, but numerous persons living within the city were also arrested and hurled into the citadel. Little if any discrimination was shown in making the arrests, and there is little doubt that the vast majority were not rebels or brigands at all.

5. The French Envoy Extraordinary sent the consular corps here a letter during the evening of the 19th instant, copy of which I have the honour to transmit herewith, stating that there would be heavy artillery firing on the following day. There is little doubt that this news, which was posted all over the city, increased the feeling of apprehension here. The bombardment duly took place on the 20th instant and lasted from 4 A.M. until 2 P.M. It was unusually intense, and the villages of the Ghouta and their inhabitants must have suffered extremely heavily. Between the bombardment losses and those inflicted upon them by the various French columns which attacked them, the rebels must have lost 400-500 killed and perhaps 200-400 wounded. The first French official communiqué reported the losses of the rebels at 150 killed, and in a later communiqué the total was stated to be "several hundreds." The French on this occasion seem to have under-estimated the losses of the Ghouta insurgents, as from a rebel source I have learnt that the loss of at least 400 killed

is admitted by them. Prisoners and hostages from the Ghouta to the number of 400-500 were also taken by the French columns.

6. It must not be thought that the French columns suffered merely trivial losses during these operations. The French official communiqué reports the French losses as 49 killed and 98 wounded, but I am inclined to believe that the French casualties were a good deal heavier and were well over 200. In the space of a few moments on the 19th instant, twelve French soldiers were killed and several wounded as a result of the explosion of a land mine on the road near Jisr Tora (1 mile north-east of Damascus); rumours are current that the explosion of several other mines accounted for many more French casualties. The most serious loss was the death of Colonel Vincq, one of the most brilliant cavalry officers in the French army.

7. It is to be feared that this latest sweep (or "nettoyage" as the French describe the operations) of the Ghouta has once more resulted in an enormous amount of wanton and quite unnecessary destruction of innocent life and property without destroying or definitely reducing to submission the "out and out" rebels. The French military authorities do not appear to have been able to come to grips with the elusive but none the less courageous leaders of the rebel movement in the Ghouta. They seem to think that by carrying out a sustained policy of "frightfulness" the spirit of the Syrians throughout the country will be crushed into absolute submission. Indications are not wanting that the above policy of the French is beginning to show signs of achieving the desired effect. The population of Damascus is weary of the whole rebellion, and as in the case of most Oriental town-dwellers personal financial considerations loom largely in their minds and overshadow their hankerings after independence, if independence demands a sacrifice of treasure and blood from them.

8. Although the rebels must by now be in a most precarious state after the unusually heavy gruel they were subjected to on the 19th and 20th instant, they made a remarkable demonstration of their resisting power on the nights of the 20th and 21st instant. During these nights quite a large number of rebel stalwarts advanced to the very edge of the barbed-wire entanglements around the city and kept up a hot fire on the French posts, who, of course, replied vigorously with machine guns, rifle bombs and mortars. Two nights of continuous firing resulted, but the casualties suffered by both sides during these exchanges of fire were no doubt trivial. The fact that these demonstrations took place immediately after the return into Damascus of the thousands of French troops from the Ghouta might be considered as a sign that the rebels are not by any means beaten, but, on the contrary, being masters of the country surrounding Damascus, they are determined to resist. I am, however, inclined to believe that these attacks on the French posts were made out of pure bravado, and that really serious resistance from the rebels in the future is now hardly possible.

9. Although the French authorities have achieved no immediate results by carrying out the foregoing military operations, which are being followed up by the despatch of further columns into the Ghouta practically every day, it seems fairly certain that the rebels cannot resist very much longer. A feeling of hopelessness and of acute pessimism as to the future of the country, coloured by bitter hatred of the French, is plainly manifest here. The strong hopes of rallying to their aid the whole of the population of Syria, which the Nationalist rebels cherished some months ago, have failed to materialise and cannot now be realised. It is now too late, for the French authorities have now taken the problem of the Syrian rebellion seriously in hand.

10. I think, therefore, that the end of the Syrian rebellion, though it is not actually in sight, lies not far beyond the horizon. I am of opinion, however, that calm and security throughout the country will not be restored or maintained for several months, or even several years. The peasantry, whose houses, crops, cattle and household effects have either been destroyed or looted during the rebellion, are ruined and will have practically nothing to turn to for a living but banditism, which has proved to be a lucrative if risky business. Public security throughout the country will remain in a bad state for a long time, and no gendarmerie, however efficient, will be able to remedy this state of affairs while the country remains in its present state of economic ruin which creates banditism. The outlook for the future is, therefore, most discouraging, both for the mandatory Power and for the mandated.

Copies of this despatch have been sent to Jerusalem (No. 161), Amman (No. 171), Bagdad (No. 150), Beirut (No. 209) and Aleppo (No. 128).

I have, &c.

J. R. VAUGHAN-RUSSELL.

Enclosure in No. 72.

M. Pierre-Alype to the Doyen of the Consular Corps at Damascus.

M. le Doyen,

Damas, le 19 juillet 1926.

J'AI l'honneur de vous informer que l'autorité militaire a prévu des tirs importants d'artillerie, qui auront lieu dans la journée de demain 20 juillet.

Je m'empresse de vous en donner avis, afin qu'il n'en résulte aucune émotion dans le corps consulaire et parmi les ressortissants étrangers résidant à Damas.

Je vous prie d'agréer, &c.

PIERRE-ALYPE.

[E 5013/146/89]

No. 73.

The Marquess of Crewe to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received August 28.)

(No. 1617.)

Sir,

Paris, August 27, 1926.

IT is now clear that M. de Jouvenel, the French High Commissioner in Syria, who returned to this country some little time ago, has no intention of proceeding again to the East. With a view, no doubt, to paving the way for his future activities, he has recently been at pains to congratulate himself, either by means of articles in the newspapers, or by public speeches, upon his conduct of affairs during his period of office and upon the skilful manner in which he has—in his own eyes, at all events—carried out his duties. This attitude of the High Commissioner was particularly marked in a recent speech which he made at a public banquet in the Corrèze. He declared that the rebellion had been quelled in Syria, that a series of agreements between Syria and the neighbouring States had been concluded, thereby ensuring external tranquillity, and that the only task remaining to France was to present to the League of Nations in September next the text of the organic statute which would determine for a long period to come the relations between France, Syria and the Lebanon. After a period of trouble and disorder, an era of peace was now about to open for the mandated countries, and he was certain that it would be impossible to find anyone, be he Syrian or French, who could argue that the mandate should be removed from French hands.

2. It is unnecessary for me to emphasise the entirely false impression which M. de Jouvenel's words must have given to his audience. Recent despatches from His Majesty's consular officers at Beirut and Damascus show only too clearly that, although the revolt in the Djebel Druse has to a large extent been crushed, yet over a large part of the country rebels are still actively opposing the French; hostilities are still being continued in the immediate neighbourhood of Damascus; bands of brigands are to be found in many quarters; public security is at a discount, and it is almost as unsafe to travel by train in Syria as it is in France. Furthermore, apart from the more military aspects of the situation, M. de Jouvenel cannot be altogether congratulated upon his conduct of the political situation. No doubt the prestige of France in Syria has been considerably raised from the low ebb to which it sank during the administration of General Sarrail, but the era of collaboration between the native population and the mandatory authorities, of which M. de Jouvenel said so much at the time of his appointment, seems still to be far off. The establishment of a Government in Syria properly representative of the native interests proved to be a failure, while nothing has been done to settle the thorny problem of the frontier between the State of Syria and the Lebanon Republic.

3. On the other hand, while the benefits of M. de Jouvenel's administration in Syria may well be questioned, it can hardly be denied that, from the point of view of French politics, his period of office has been a success. Prior to his departure for the East, the situation in Syria was a constant source of trouble and embarrassment to the Government, who were being continually attacked by the Chamber on the subject. Hardly a day passed without a violent article appearing in the newspapers of the Right attacking General Sarrail and, through him, the Government, while there was at one time quite an agitation in favour of the abandonment of the mandate by France. The appointment of M. de Jouvenel changed all this. Syria has quite ceased to be a topic of debate in Parliament or a subject for newspaper articles, and, apart from an occasional notice in the press reporting some successful military action

against the rebels, hardly any mention of Syria has been made in the papers for a long time. All question of the abandonment of the mandate would seem to have been dropped; the fears which were at one time expressed regarding the lowering of the prestige of France in the East and of the difficult position in which she was likely to find herself *vis-à-vis* of the League of Nations have ceased to be mentioned and complete satisfaction appears to reign regarding the state of affairs.

4. It is, of course, obvious that public opinion has been so distracted recently by the financial crisis through which the country is passing and by the kaleidoscopic changes of the Government that it has had little opportunity of paying attention to Syrian affairs. At the same time, the situation in Morocco, the unsatisfactory state of which had previously disturbed French opinion, and made it more sensitive to the news from Syria, has been restored and has ceased to be the cause of any anxiety. Furthermore, as I explained on more than one occasion in the despatches which I had the honour to address to you last year on this subject, the question of General Sarraill's personality played a very large part in the agitation which arose over the rebellion in the Djebel Druse and the general *débâcle* in Syria. With the removal of the general and the appointment of M. de Jouvenel, who was neither the sworn enemy of the Right nor the idol of the Socialists, public opinion, which had become so inflamed, was allowed to calm down. It was, in addition, impossible to accuse M. de Jouvenel of being a violent freemason and anti-clerical, while his past history made it clear that the League of Nations aspect of the question would be fully respected.

5. It may, therefore, be said that, from the point of view of internal politics, M. de Jouvenel has deserved well of the different Governments under whom he has served, in that he has relieved them of any fear of attacks being made upon them in Parliament on account of their Syrian policy. From the point of view of Syria itself, however, and of the High Commissioners, who will in the future be faced with the problem of clearing up the Syrian situation as left by M. de Jouvenel, the success of the latter may be questioned.

I have, &c.
CREWE.

[E 5074/146/89]

No. 74.

The Marquess of Crewe to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 1643.)

Sir,

Paris, August 30, 1926.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that M. Henri Ponsot, Minister Plenipotentiary and head of the African and Levant Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, has been appointed to succeed M. Henry de Jouvenel as French High Commissioner in Syria.

2. M. Ponsot was born in 1877 and entered the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in 1904. After serving for some years in the Far East as French consul at Bangkok, he returned to the Central Administration, where he filled various posts. In 1918 he was appointed as consul-general at Montreal. Two years later he was sent on a special mission to Upper Silesia, and was subsequently attached to the Residency at Tunis as Director of the Interior. It will be recollected that M. Ponsot was one of the French delegates at the recent negotiations at Oudjda, and also played an important rôle at the Franco-Spanish conference which followed later for the settlement of the Moroccan question.

3. I should like to add that this Embassy has always been on the very best terms with M. Ponsot, who has on every occasion been most helpful and ready to assist and furnish any information which might be required.

4. It is similarly announced that General Camelin, Commander-in-chief of the army in the Levant, will be replaced by General Billotte, at present commanding a division in that army.

I have, &c.
CREWE.

No. 75.

Consul, Damascus, to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received September 2.)

(No. 30. Secret.)

(Telegraphic.)

Damascus, September 2, 1926

ON the 31st August French military authorities proposed peace pourparlers to Fauzi Kaukji, commander of Nationalists in Ghouta.

Sincerity of proposal is doubtful; it is probably an expedient to stage-manage an atmosphere of peace, to which the French attach great importance for discussion at Geneva.

Fauzi is replying that he is not authorised to negotiate and that public pourparlers should be instituted with [? the authority of] Atrash and Shahbandar.

[E 5160/12/89]

No. 76.

Acting Consul Vaughan-Russell to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received September 7.)

(No. 237.)

Sir,

Damascus, August 4, 1926.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 185 of the 2nd June last, I have the honour to report that the work of pacification in the Jebel Druse would appear to be proceeding fairly smoothly and to all appearances successfully. French columns have been carrying out reconnaissances and meeting with little opposition. By this date the area under French control would appear to have been extended to the majority of the Jebel Druse.

2. Precise details of these military reconnaissances would only be obtainable from the French military authorities with some difficulty, and in any case would not provide very interesting material for despatches to you. In the present state of French Anglophobe feeling, a show of interest on my part (however innocent and reasonable) might well be interpreted by the suspicious, colonial type of Frenchmen here to indicate sinister and ulterior designs on my part or on the part of His Majesty's Government. The absurd theory that Great Britain is at the bottom of the Druse rebellion is still widely believed. I have therefore not deemed it advisable to press the French authorities to give me details concerning the operation in the Jebel Druse.

3. As an indication of what the French authorities appear to have achieved during the past few weeks, I have the honour to transmit herewith the last official communiqué issued by the French Press Bureau and published in the Syrian press yesterday, the 3rd instant. The area remaining under the control of Sultan Pasha Atrash and his followers is steadily dwindling; Druse villages are steadily being won over by General Andréa, who is pursuing a policy of peaceful penetration which appears to be succeeding.

4. I learn, however, that many French officers criticise adversely this policy, which they describe as weak and full of danger for the future. They maintain that a firm and ruthless policy ought to be carried out in the Jebel Druse to banish once for all the danger of another insurrection. The population there being more warlike and primitive, firmness and force are more appreciated and understood than clemency and gentle treatment. Many of these officers feel apprehension for the future, and believe that the Druses are not really surrendering and returning once for all to their peaceful pursuits, but are biding their time until they can rise again and make another bid for liberty.

5. Although there is some truth in these opinions, I am inclined to think that General Andréa's policy will pay in the long run, but only under certain conditions. It is essential that the French authorities should be scrupulously fair in all their dealings with the Druses and very firm and just in their administration. They should also allow no abuses to creep into their system of control, and should be prepared to maintain a large and well-behaved garrison in the Jebel Druse sufficient to deal with any emergency. If they are prepared to administer the Jebel under these circumstances, General Andréa's present policy may reasonably be hoped to succeed.

6. If the French authorities, whether for reasons of economy or because suitable administrators and sufficient troops are not available, cannot carry out the foregoing conditions, General Andréa's policy may indeed turn out to be dangerous and result in a further Druse campaign in the future. Sultan Pasha Atrash would hardly seem able

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to resist for very much longer, and there are persistent rumours here that he is throwing out feelers with a view to negotiating for peace.

(Copies of this despatch have been sent to Jerusalem (No. 165), Bagdad (No. 153), Amman (No. 174), Beirut (No. 214) and Aleppo (No. 130).)

I have, &c.

J. R. VAUGHAN-RUSSELL.

Enclosure in No. 76.

Extract from the "Syrie" of August 3, 1926.

PRÈS DE 3,000 FUSILS REMIS PAR LES DRUSES.

Le Général Gouverneur du Djebel Druse a reçu, le 30 juillet, les notables de Soueïda et des villages de Mokran ouest qui ont affirmé leurs sentiments de loyalisme.

Le Colonel Massiet s'est porté sur Kafer, le 31 juillet, avec trois bataillons. A Salouet, Belata et à Kafer la population s'est portée au-devant de la colonne. Les notables ont manifesté leurs sentiments de confiance en la France.

Du Djebel Druse on mande que la colonne Massiet et le groupement de Ressay sont rentrés à Soueïda le 1^{er} août dans la matinée.

Le Général Gouverneur du Djebel Druse a remis la croix de guerre au 16^e régiment de tirailleurs tunisiens et à un escadron de garde mobile druse.

Au 31 juillet, le total des armes et des amendes versées par les villages soumis était : 8 mitrailleuses, 7 F.M., 2,935 fusils, 3,175 livres-or.

[E 5167/12/89]

No. 77.

Consul Hole to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received September 7.)

(No. 251. Confidential.)

Sir,

Damascus, August 19, 1926.

I HAVE the honour to submit a summary report on the situation at Damascus.

2. Hostilities in the Ghouta have been much less intense during the past fortnight. The French have not carried out any bombardments since those of the 4th and 5th August, neither of which lasted an hour. One of these was directed against the village of Berzeh, which received a hundred shells for failing to report the passage of a band a short distance from its boundaries. There have been fewer exchanges of rifle-fire at night, and none of any importance.

3. From a military point of view, there is every indication that the spirit of the Nationalists has been weakened by the intensive bombardment and clearing operations carried out in the Ghouta in late July; they realise that they cannot stand up to the crushing superiority of armament, of which the French have shown their determination to take every advantage. The sack of the Ghouta has deprived them of their sources of supply, and the capture of their archives at Hadinet has contributed to their dislocation. Many of the rank and file have thrown away their arms and returned to their old avocations in the city.

4. The chiefs desire nothing more than to come to terms; with a very little conciliation on the French side I am convinced that peace could be restored; but the French are flushed with victory and refuse to discuss anything but unconditional surrender. They have given the rebels warning of what may await them by condemning to death (by default) a number of the leading Druses, including Dr. Shahbandar, Sultan Atrash, Emir Adel Arslan, Ukla-el-Katamy and many others. They have despatched three converging columns to Mejd-el-esh-Shams, and a column about 4,000 strong with eight tanks yesterday morning left for the Ghouta. A tenth of this firmness a year ago would probably have completely stifled the insurrection, but it is now open to doubt whether there is much to be gained by a prolongation of the measures of extreme severity which have lately been applied in the Ghouta.

5. French official circles and the Syrian Ministers are extremely optimistic, and assure me that in a fortnight at latest Damascus will enter on the golden age. A system of blockhouses is to be established throughout the Ghouta, and the villagers encouraged to return to their homes; the Meidan quarter is to be reoccupied by

peaceful citizens, with the assistance of civic guards of their own appointment; various roads through the Ghouta are declared safe for traffic; a narrow-gauge railway has been picturesquely inaugurated between Khirbet-Ghazaieh and Soueïda. If, as is highly probable, these excellent measures remain in practice entirely ineffective, the fault lies entirely with the incessant changes of French officials and consequent incoherence of policy, which oscillates between journalism and frightfulness and affords no guarantee of stability or security. If the rebels had to deal with a High Commissioner who could be expected to remain long enough to assure the execution of his own promises, the present French optimism would be justified.

6. In the meantime, the path to a settlement is blocked by the French infatuation with their prestige, which drives them to refuse to consider anything short of complete and unconditional surrender. It is at least an open question whether their prestige would have suffered humiliation from the adoption of a system like our own in Iraq more than it has from this long submission to a virtual state of siege. However that may be, it is improbable that any chief will surrender unless he is tolerably well assured of amnesty, and however soothing an unconditional surrender might be to bruised national vanity, such a success would be very short-lived, unless it was immediately followed by a programme of concessions to Nationalist feeling very similar to what has been demanded from the beginning.

7. At present the French are in a strong enough position to make concessions. The rebels are defeated and know it. A little statesmanship should assure a fairly permanent settlement, but the lack of it may well prolong indefinitely the present unattractive situation. It is to be observed that though the rebellion is scotched, it is by no means extinct, and that the rebels are still in a position to confine the French within their defences and to harass them whenever they venture out otherwise than in force. They have learnt sufficient tactics to avoid anything in the nature of a pitched battle, and to concentrate their forces against small and exposed parties. They have nothing left to lose; the fear of punitive bombardment evaporates when all the villages have been bombarded. There is no reason why guerrilla fighting should not continue for another year or more.

Copies of this despatch have been sent to Jerusalem (No. 167), Amman (No. 181), Bagdad (No. 157), Beirut (No. 219) and Aleppo (No. 133).

I have, &c.

E. C. HOLE.

[E 5216/146/89]

No. 78.

Consul-General Satow to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received September 9.)

(No. 179.)

Sir,

Beirut, August 30, 1926.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 165 of the 13th August, it appears that after all M. de Jouvenel will not return and that his successor is to be M. Auguste Ponsot, assistant chief of the African and Levant Section of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, whose appointment, which seems to have come as a surprise, is announced to-day.

2. The new High Commissioner, who is only 49, entered the consular service in 1903. After working for a time in the Ministry he was sent to Siam, where during a part of his stay his services were loaned to the Siamese Government. He then went back to the Ministry, and later was sent to Berlin. In 1914 he was assistant "chef de cabinet" to the Minister. During 1916 and 1917 he was employed on special war work connected with propaganda and the press, and in 1918 he was appointed consul-general at Montreal. In 1920 he was sent on a mission to Upper Silesia in connection with the plebiscite. Then he held the post of Director of the Interior in Tunis, after which he was promoted Minister and given the appointment which he now vacates in order to take up the duties of High Commissioner in Syria.

3. M. Ponsot is reputed to know all there is to know about Syria from the Paris end, and it is to be hoped that he will be given ample time to perfect his knowledge on the spot. He will be the fifth High Commissioner whom I have known in the space of just over five and a half years, and the frequent changes in the appointment go a long way to explain the lack of continuity and consistence in French policy in this country. It is to be hoped that he will indeed, as is predicted, prove himself to be "the right man in the right place."

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4. The new High Commissioner has the same rank and almost the same seniority as the secretary-general, who is now Acting High Commissioner. This may create a difficult situation, but M. de Reffye has in the last year or two adapted himself to so many such situations that it may be predicted that, until a new and better appointment offers itself, he will manage to work in harmony with M. Ponsot.

Copies of this despatch have been sent to Bagdad and Jerusalem.

I have, &c.

H. E. SATOW.

[E 5560/18/65]

No. 79.

Mr. Phipps to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received September 29.)

(No. 1808.)

Sir,

Paris, September 28, 1926.

WITH a view to carrying out the instructions contained in your despatch No. 2732 of the 24th instant, I handed to M. Berthelot to-day a copy of the enclosed memorandum.

2. M. Berthelot, after perusal of this document, promised to send a written reply shortly. Meanwhile, he explained to me that the French Government certainly consider and have always maintained that the Turco-Syrian frontier runs from Jeziret-ibn-Omar down to the Tigris to the point where the "Brussels line" starts, but the Turks have never themselves admitted this. In the first Angora Agreement it was laid down that the Turco-Syrian frontier should follow the "old road" from Nisibin to Jeziret-ibn-Omar, and by this the French naturally meant the old Roman road which was clearly marked in some places by flagstones. The Turks, however, at that time declined to recognise this, and maintained that the frontier must follow a road from Nisibin considerably south of the above, ending in the desert at a point a long way to the south-west of Jeziret-ibn-Omar. Unfortunately, in the recent Angora Agreement M. de Jouvenel and M. Sarraut had contented themselves with again referring to the "old road" without specifying that the more northerly road was intended. The French Government had several times urged the Turkish Government to proceed to a delimitation of the frontier on the spot, which, after endless delays, the Turks eventually agreed to. When, however, the French frontier commissioners met the Turks, the latter merely reiterated their claim that the frontier should follow the southern road, and eventually broke off the negotiations and went away. The Turks had for some months past placed outposts well to the south of even this more southerly road, and declined to move them on the plea that the outposts were necessary to protect Turkish territory from Kurdish incursions. M. Berthelot remarked that force was the only thing that the Turks seemed to understand, and he feared that, until France had a strong and intelligent Ambassador at Constantinople, no progress would be made with any Franco-Turkish controversies. As M. Berthelot described M. Daeschner to me recently as "un honnête homme, pas très fort," he evidently does not think that that moment has yet arrived. He then referred again to the wholesome effect which had been created near Nisibin by the appearance of a strong detachment there (see Paris telegram No. 356 of the 14th September). However, as stated above, M. Berthelot will in due course furnish a written reply to the memorandum which I handed him to-day.

I have, &c.

ERIC PHIPPS.

Enclosure in No. 79.

Aide-mémoire.

HIS Majesty's Government assume that the Government of the Republic is satisfied that the effect of the various arrangements which it has made with Turkey is that the Turco-Syrian frontier runs from Jeziret-ibn-Omar down the Tigris to the point where the "Brussels line" starts, and that the Government of the Republic does not consider any further steps necessary for the purpose of defining this part of the frontier.

Paris, September 27, 1926.

[E 5674/146/89]

No. 80.

The Marquess of Crewe to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received October 7.)

(No. 1854.)

Sir,

Paris, October 6, 1926.

I HAVE the honour, with reference to my despatch No. 1643 of the 30th August, to inform you that M. Henri Ponsot, the new French High Commissioner in Syria, embarked at Marseilles on the 5th instant. Amongst those who took leave of him on his departure from Paris was M. de Jouvenel, his predecessor in Syria.

2. Before leaving Marseilles M. Ponsot informed the press that he was going to Syria without any fixed programme. Since his appointment as High Commissioner he had discussed with numerous experts in Paris the various political, administrative and economic problems with which he would have to deal. He concluded by saying that he hoped to remain for a long period in Syria, seeing that it was important to avoid constant changes in the representative of the mandatory Power.

I have, &c.

CREWE.

[E 5750/12/89]

No. 81.

Consul Hole to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received October 11.)

(No. 285. Confidential.)

Sir,

Damascus, Syria, September 28, 1926.

I HAVE the honour to submit a further report on the general situation in my district.

2. The centre of operations tends more and more to shift to the Hauran. The greater part of the bands till recently operating in the Ghouta have moved to that district, partly to watch events at Geneva and partly in the hope of rousing the Hauranese by their presence. It is felt in Nationalist circles that the Hauran is more likely to respond to the stimulus of the example of Damascenes, while the efforts of their Druse neighbours might leave them apathetic.

3. This exodus is also undoubtedly due to the increasing difficulty which the rebels experience in operating in the Ghouta. Ammunition is scarcer, and the villagers are becoming less anxious to risk the severe punishments inflicted by the French on anyone assisting the rebels; in consequence, several hidden stores of ammunition have been betrayed to the French and the position has become progressively more difficult for the rebels.

4. The Ghouta has therefore been unusually quiet, with the exception of a small skirmish at Dummar on the 22nd September. The town of Damascus has also been much less disturbed.

5. From the Jebel Druse vigorous fighting is reported; the columns which have been traversing the country have encountered strong opposition on at least two occasions during the last fortnight, in the second of which, on the 20th September, the French sustained heavy casualties. According to information as reliable as can be expected in this country, a column of two battalions which had seen some fighting at the end of the previous week rested at Orman, east of Salkhad, on the 19th; on the 20th one battalion marched towards Sueida via El Kafr, while the other proceeded south-west to Umm-el-Rumman. The first was ambushed in a wooded valley near El Kafr, and seems only to have escaped destruction by the return of the other battalion, which took the Druses in the rear.

6. It is noteworthy that this action marks a much greater degree of co-operation than has yet been exhibited by the Nationalists; Sultan Atrash seems to have been operating in concert with four or five other chiefs.

7. The Greek Catholic Bishop, Mgr. Cadi, left last week for the Jebel on a mission described as personal, but unquestionably at the desire of the French authorities. He returned two days ago, the negotiations having fallen through.

8. The negotiations with Fozi Kaoukji mentioned in paragraph 8 of my despatch under reference have definitely fallen through.

9. The French efforts to restore a semblance of normal life at Damascus are meeting with a measure of apparent success; the Meidan quarter is being reoccupied,

though largely under compulsion; motor traffic is beginning on the Damascus-Beirut road; French soldiers are seen in parts of the city which they previously avoided; an interior barricade is being removed to give access to the Bagdad boulevard, which has not, however, yet been opened to traffic. On the other hand, energetic measures were taken to prevent any demonstration on the occasion of the Mouled (Prophet's birthday), which fell on the 19th September; and the French Command shows that it has no intention of relaxing its grip by a recent communiqué providing for the complete destruction of any house or garden from which a shot is fired against the troops.

10. It is hard to determine to what extent the outward appearance of calm which the French have imposed on Damascus reflects the real situation. The absence of demonstrations by no means indicates a change of heart in the population; I think I may safely assert that the French are as cordially detested as ever, and that this sentiment is practically universal. On the other hand, the French military methods of "frightfulness" are such as to discourage any active manifestations, and, although the great majority of Syrians would hail with delight the discomfiture of the mandatory Power, they have a very human tendency to achieve this desirable event by vicarious sacrifice, and show little enthusiasm when it is a question of their own pockets or persons. Nevertheless, it is not hard to imagine a combination of circumstances that would release the pent-up hatred of the Syrians, and, in spite of their assumption of satisfaction, the French are the first to realise that they are sitting on a volcano.

11. It is not impossible that the French may enforce submission, but there is very little hope of peace.

(Copies of this despatch have been sent to Jerusalem (No. 179), Amman (No. 196), Bagdad (No. 169), Beirut (No. 233) and Aleppo (No. 141).)

I have, &c.

E. C. HOLE.

[E 5873/18/65]

No. 82.

The Marquess of Crewe to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received October 19.)

(No. 1934.)

HIS Majesty's representative at Paris presents his compliments to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and has the honour to transmit herewith copy of a note from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, dated the 16th October, 1926, respecting Turco-Syrian boundaries.

Paris, October 18, 1926.

Enclosure in No. 82.

French Ministry for Foreign Affairs to British Embassy.

PAR une note en date du 27 septembre, l'Ambassade de Sa Majesté britannique a bien voulu entretenir le Ministère des Affaires étrangères de la question des frontières du territoire syrien sous mandat français entre Djezireh-ben-Omar et le point de départ sur le Tigre de la ligne de Bruxelles.

Le Ministère des Affaires étrangères remercie l'Ambassade de Sa Majesté britannique de sa communication et a l'honneur de lui faire savoir qu'il considère effectivement que le territoire de la Syrie sous mandat de la France a pour limites le cours du Tigre entre les deux points ci-dessus visés.

Paris, le 16 octobre 1926.

[E 5933/52/89]

No. 83.

Consul Hole to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received October 21.)

(No. 290. Secret.)

Damascus, October 7, 1926.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to submit a report on certain questions affecting Anglo-French relations in this country.

2. During the past month the French authorities have devoted a great deal of attention to Anglo-French co-operation in general, and more particularly on the Syro-Transjordan frontier. Hardly a single issue of "La Syrie" (notoriously in the French pay), has failed to publish a report of cordial relations at Geneva, declaration of concerted European policy, "understandings" with regard to the Near and Middle East, and the like; even though the same issue may contain a leading article asserting that the Druse revolt was prepared by Lady Hester Stanhope or that our administration in Iraq is infinitely more burdensome than their own in Syria. The issues of the last week concentrate on an alleged closer liaison on the Transjordan frontier; the British forces have been largely increased, trainloads of British soldiers have passed through Deraa for the purpose of stiffening the frontier guards, French intelligence officers have been conferring with British to form a combined plan for the final subjugation of the Nationalists. This news is also distributed to the Arab press and spread verbally by the Intelligence Service.

3. The effusive expressions of friendliness which have suddenly been directed on me by French officials here are manifestly part of this concerted "drive" (which originated possibly in the visit to Beirut of the French consul-general at Jerusalem at the beginning of September); the new-born enthusiasm would be more convincing if there was less ostentation and publicity about its expression.

4. I have no reason to believe in such a sudden change of heart, and I am convinced that, with very few exceptions, the French official in Syria still clings to the superstition that we are at the bottom of the rebellion; and I do not think that any concessions that we might make to their demands would convince them of the contrary. They would be regarded simply as a cloak for even more sinister schemes.

5. Viewed from this standpoint, the plan evolved by French authorities is a logical and intelligent riposte to our presumed treachery; to coax us into anti-Nationalist measures or failing that, to pretend that they have done so; the object in either case being to break the moral of the Nationalists, who have always derived comfort from their conviction of at least our sympathy, and by discrediting us in Arab eyes to provoke sufficient trouble in our mandated territories to keep us from meddling in theirs.

6. The results of any such action on our part may be gauged by the observable effects of the mere report of it; the Nationalists, already wearied by a year of resistance to immeasurably superior armament, are profoundly discouraged and disheartened, and the French may well hope that they will be in a properly malleable condition at the arrival of the new High Commissioner.

7. I would venture, however, to emphasise what appears to me of infinitely greater consequence to ourselves—the natural violent reaction of the Nationalists to what they might reasonably regard as an eleventh-hour betrayal. It must be remembered that the rebels have from the beginning counted on our sympathy, as a Power which has supported Arab aspirations and is sincerely endeavouring in Iraq to educate the Arab up to independence; and the fact that on the frontier we had not accepted the French view that Nationalists are brigands, to be disarmed and extradited, has confirmed their belief in our benevolent dispositions. If at the last minute, when they feel most hopeless, Great Britain were to change her attitude and suddenly to kick them when they are down, it is not unthinkable that they might conceive a greater resentment against us than against France. The repercussions in Iraq and Palestine are obvious.

8. I would remark in passing that the French insistence on the purely brigand and criminal status of the rebels is entirely inconsistent with the facts; for extradition purposes they deny the essentially political character of the movement, but they have themselves admitted their status as belligerents on many occasions by the use of flags of truce, by the exchange of prisoners, by negotiations with the Nationalist chiefs—whenever, in fact, it suited their convenience.

9. I am writing with a very partial knowledge of conditions outside the limits of my own district, and it is possible that I exaggerate the importance of the psychological reactions of the Arab; but I feel that I should be doing less than my duty if I failed to draw attention to what seems to me a serious danger.

Copies of this despatch have been sent to Jerusalem (No. 180), Amman (No. 198), Bagdad (No. 171), Beirut (No. 235) and Aleppo (No. 142).

I have, &c.
E. C. HOLE.

[E 5933/52/89]

No. 84.

Foreign Office to Consul Hole (Damascus).

(No. 108. Secret.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, November 1, 1926.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Austen Chamberlain to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch No 290 of the 7th October, reporting on certain aspects of the policy a present pursued by the French authorities in Syria and the possible reactions of that policy in the territories under British mandate.

2. In the first part of that despatch you express the view that the French authorities, in spite of profuse professions of friendship, still harbour, and will continue to harbour, suspicions that the rebel movement in Syria is receiving encouragement and support from British sources.

3. You then proceed to the argument that it is the object of the French to coax the British authorities into anti-Nationalist measures, or to pretend that they have done so, in order to destroy the moral of the Nationalists, "who have always derived comfort from their conviction of at least our sympathy," and that, as a result, the Nationalists are profoundly discouraged and disheartened, and may violently react to what "they might reasonably regard as an eleventh hour betrayal."

4. Now the above argument would, in effect, constitute a justification for the very attitude on the part of the French authorities which it is intended to condemn, implying, as it does, that the rebellion would long ago have been suppressed had not the rebels been sustained and encouraged, even in their defeat, by the conviction that they possessed the sympathy of the British authorities and could derive comfort from and, in case of need, find a refuge and a base in adjacent British territory. Great Britain, after encouraging them, has betrayed them. Thus the French would interpret your argument, consoling themselves with the reflection that, taught by this bitter lesson, Great Britain would be less anxious to pursue in future a policy founded on purely selfish motives.

5. Apart, however, from the above considerations, and while there may be no small measure of truth in your appreciation of the attitude of the French officials and their policy in regard to the Syrian rebellion, the general tone and temper of your despatch suggest an outlook not entirely in harmony with the spirit in conformity with which His Majesty's Government desire to conduct their relations with the French in the Near East, and particularly in Syria.

6. I am therefore to take this opportunity of reminding you that it is the cardinal aim of His Majesty's Government, in so far as may be possible, to collaborate, in a spirit of sympathy and friendship, with the French Government in every sphere in which the interests of the one may, in any way, be affected by the interests of the other. To this end it is vitally necessary that every effort should be directed by British consular officers, situated as yourself, not merely to maintain a negative attitude of aloofness, but, by evincing a sympathetic understanding of the difficulties with which the French authorities may be confronted, to gain their confidence and so eliminate any suspicions, however unfounded, they may at present harbour in regard to the actions and motives of British officials in the Near East.

I am, &c.
LANCELOT OLIPHANT.

[E 6219/146/89]

No. 85.

Consul-General Satow to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received November 8.)

(No. 197. Confidential.)

Sir,

Beirut, October 14, 1926.

I HAVE the honour to report that M. Ponsot, the new High Commissioner, arrived on the 12th October and that he was received with the customary ceremonial. No great public interest was aroused by his arrival. People have got used to these comings and goings of High Commissioners, and are very sceptical as to whether this one will be able to do anything right. Within an hour of his landing he received the consular body, and the French civil officials, officers and colony. The first impression made on all those with whom I spoke was a good one. It appears that he has only brought out with him two new officials, that he intends to make no changes in the existing staff for two months, although, of course, changes will have to be made if greater efficiency is to be obtained, and that he is to remain here for a fixed period which is believed to be four years. Yesterday he received the Presidents of the Lebanese Republic and of Syria, other local deputations and the clergy.

2. In the course of the short conversation which I had with M. Ponsot, he made a brief allusion to the difficult task which lies before him. There is, indeed, much to be done. French prestige has been badly damaged and confidence in France and in French ability to be of real help and utility to Syria has weakened to a surprising degree even among those who began by being her warm supporters. M. Ponsot, in his work of finally bringing to an end the Druse Nationalist insurrection, which shows distinct signs of weakening, and of starting the work of reconstruction, may be hampered by the attitude of the military authorities, who seem of late rather to have taken the bit in their teeth and in some cases, at least, to wish to exact vengeance to the uttermost. As for the economic improvement of the country, nothing of real importance has been done for nearly two years. Both General Sarrail and M. de Jouvenel have been far too busy with politics to have had time for much really useful work. There are indications that M. Ponsot, when he has got his bearings, intends to endeavour to improve in various ways the material position of the people, in which way alone the prevailing discontent can be gradually appeased.

3. I enclose an article by a M. de Gontaut-Biron, reproduced from a French paper, which has been published in the "Réveil." Although the writer occasionally produces nonsense, the present article seems to contain a good deal of truth. It is interesting also in that it calls attention to the ephemeral nature of M. de Jouvenel's work here. There is no doubt much not only to be done but also to be re-done, and it is sincerely to be hoped that the first impression created by M. Ponsot that he is the man who may be able to do it will be justified.

Copies of this despatch have been sent to Bagdad and Jerusalem.

I have, &c.
H. E. SATOW.

[E 6444/12/89]

No. 86.

Consul Hole to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received November 22.)

(No. 299. Confidential.)

Sir,

Damascus, October 29, 1926.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 285, Confidential, of the 28th September, I have the honour to submit a further report on the situation in my district.

2. The period under review is divided sharply by the arrival of the new French High Commissioner on the 17th October. Before that date, the district had been particularly quiet. Beyond a few skirmishes in the Ghouta in the last days of September, and a punitive aerial bombardment of the village of Dael, in the Hauran, on the 2nd October (for failing to prevent a rebel attempt to destroy a railway bridge in the vicinity), no fighting took place. The Damascus-Beirut road traffic increased largely and the resettlement of the Ghouta made distinct progress. The Hauran showed little disposition to rise, and the Jebel produced nothing more than a crop of sensational rumours.

[15799]

P

3. The arrival of M. Ponsot was celebrated with some pomp—receptions, banquets and a review. The general impression that he leaves is good, and it cannot but be to everyone's advantage that the direction of affairs is in the hands of an experienced career officer. The keynote of press comment is his reticence; he has abstained from any statement of his plans—a welcome contrast to the journalistic methods of his predecessor.

4. M. Ponsot paid a short visit to the Ghouta on the 19th October and left on the same day for Soueida in a strongly-guarded train. Addresses were presented at various stations on the line and school children gave renderings of French songs. The night was spent at Deraa, where a deputation of Hauran notables presented their respects.

5. After a review of Druse partisans, delegations from the northern and southern districts of the Jebel were introduced by Sheikh Ahmad-el-Hajary, a Druse religious chief who recently made his submission, and Fares Bey El Atrash and Hamzeh Darweesh. Speeches were exchanged, and, in particular, Hamzeh Darweesh made a direct reference to the Druse desire for autonomy. M. Ponsot promised to study the matter.

6. All the delegations laid stress on General Andrea's popularity, and expressed the desire that he should remain in the Jebel. It is probable that this desire is sincere. General Andrea is one of a few officers, like General Billotte and Commandant Bourgeois, who have succeeded in obtaining the respect and confidence of the Syrians. It is to be hoped that the previously current reports of his being superseded are incorrect.

7. The most important incident in the proceedings was the submission of an influential member of the Atrash family, Abdul Ghaffar Pasha. It is firmly believed in Nationalist circles that King Feisal arrived at some kind of understanding with the French Government, and on his passage through Amman advised the Nationalist leaders to come to terms. Till now, the French High Commission has steadily refused to treat on any other basis than unconditional surrender, and the Nationalist chiefs have not sufficient confidence in French clemency to take this difficult and irrevocable step. Abdul Ghaffar seems to have been selected as a test case: in making his submission, he expressed the desire of the Syrians to confer with the High Commissioner and explain their aspirations. The High Commissioner replied that France wished for nothing more than the happiness of the Druses and that their desires might safely be communicated to him through General Andrea.

8. This reply is variously construed as expressing willingness to discuss terms or the exact contrary, and Nationalist opinion is sharply divided on the subject. Some disappointment was undoubtedly felt that a less non-committal statement was not made, and the Nationalists decided on a demonstration of their vitality. The High Commissioner's train was fired on during the return journey, and converging descents were made on the Ghouta by several rebel bands under Shekib Wahhab, Fauzi Kaoukji, Izzeddin Jezairly, and others, and from the 20th to the 24th October lively fighting took place at different points, chiefly south of Damascus. Victory is claimed by both sides; the French communiqué (a copy of which is attached*) probably affords a somewhat rosy view of the operations, making no mention of the French casualties—roughly equal to the enemy's—nor, in particular, to the loss of Osman Bey, the organiser and commander of the Circassian partisans. Osman Bey had created this unit by his own personality, and his work was thought sufficiently important to merit his decoration as Commander of the Legion of Honour. His death is a serious loss to the French. The Nationalists are very satisfied over the late fighting, in which they consider they have emphatically reaffirmed their existence and their claim to the sympathetic attention of the Mandates Commission.

9. After his submission, Abdul Ghaffar Pasha was allowed to go to El Azrak to collect his chattels, and is expected to arrive to-day in Damascus on his way to Beirut. He is supposed to have been in touch with Sultan Atrash and other leaders, and it seems highly probable that he will have been entrusted with the presentation of the Druse case to the French authorities.

10. The submission of Abdul Ghaffar is not unconnected with the feudal rivalries of the Druse chiefs. In last July another important chieftain, Hamzeh Darweesh, submitted to the French and was sent back to Salkhad as kaimakam, it is more than likely that he regarded himself as a strong favourite for the post of Governor of the future pacified mountain. The Atrash clan now enter their own candidate in the person of Abdul Ghaffar, who is generally considered far more

* Not printed.

desirable. If this very tempting explanation may be accepted and the rebel leaders are already preparing for post-settlement rivalries, it would appear that the end is not too far off.

Copies of this despatch have been sent to Jerusalem (No. 183), Beirut (No. 242), Amman (No. 201), Bagdad (No. 175) and Aleppo (No. 145).

I have, &c.

E. C. HOLE.

[E 6713/146/89]

No. 87.

The Marquess of Crewe to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received December 7.)

(No. 2319.)

Paris, December 6, 1926.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to inform you that surprisingly little attention was paid to Syria during the debate in the Chamber of Deputies on the budget for the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Perhaps, had further time been allotted for this debate, more Deputies would have spoken about Syria, but as it was, practically the only speech in which Syria was mentioned was that of M. Cachin, the Communist Deputy. M. Cachin, true to his principles, declared once more that his party were of the opinion that France should forthwith surrender her mandate and evacuate her country. Her continued presence there was contrary to the wishes of the native population and tended to serve no interests save those of the capitalist classes.

2. M. Briand made as brief reference to Syria in his speech. He declared that the situation was gradually becoming more stable, and that the present High Commissioner was carrying on methodically the work of his predecessor with a view to general pacification. Preparations were being carried on with a view to giving the native populations the liberal Constitution which they were entitled to expect, and France was in every way amply fulfilling her obligations as the mandatory Power. Full enquiries had been made into all the recent unfortunate events, and the report communicated by the Government of the Republic to the League of Nations had been unanimously approved by the Mandates Commission. This was sufficient proof that the French Government had no cause to be dissatisfied with itself in this connection. As to the suggestion that France should abandon the mandate, he indignantly refused even to discuss it.

3. The discussion later on of article 54 of the budget, which allots 11 million francs for the expenses of the High Commissioner in Syria, permitted a further discussion of the situation in Syria, but only one speech was made. This, which was of no particular interest, was delivered by M. Berthon, a Communist, who, in the name of his party, demanded the suppression of the High Commission. He declared that the Syrians were crying out for liberty. The Syrians were a people who had an incontestable right to decide their own future and to determine their own fate. It was only by setting up a Syrian federation, within which each race would be allowed to rule themselves according to a Constitution of their own choosing, that France could justify her position as a mandatory Power, a position which up to now she had grossly abused.

I have, &c.

CREWE.

CHAPTER III.—IRAQ.

No. 88.

Sir Austen Chamberlain to Sir P. Loraine (Tehran).(No. 102.)
(Telegraphic.)*Foreign Office, July 1, 1926.*

YOUR telegram No. 134 of 4th June: Recognition of Irak by Persia. Shah's accession being more recent than that of King Feisal, announcement of the latter's accession now seems inappropriate.

Sir H. Dobbs therefore suggests that first step should be made by Irak, as was originally proposed, but that Irak mission to Tehran should be of a complimentary nature to congratulate Reza Shah on his accession.

You should endeavour to arrange matters accordingly

No. 89.

Sir R. Lindsay (No. 35) to High Commissioner, Bagdad.—(Repeated to Foreign Office; Received July 11.)(No. 92.)
(Telegraphic.) R.*Constantinople, July 10, 1926.*

TREATY ratifications will be exchanged at Angora probably 17th July, when I shall be there.

Is there anything I should say about first meeting of Frontier Commission, e.g., date of meeting? Turkish Government probably will appoint military commander of frontier as their representative.

No. 90.

Sir Austen Chamberlain to Sir R. Lindsay (Constantinople).(No. 79.)
(Telegraphic.) R.*Foreign Office, July 15, 1926.*

YOUR telegram No. 92 of 10th July: Turco-Iraq Frontier Commission. Please ascertain from the Turkish Government how many officials they propose to appoint to represent Turkey on the Permanent Frontier Commission instituted by article 13 of the treaty, and inform High Commissioner, Bagdad, in order that Iraq Government may appoint an equal number.

Sir H. Dobbs has been instructed to communicate to you direct any views that he or Iraq Government may have on this question and to draw up, in consultation with Iraq Government, a draft agenda for first meeting of the commission in order that it may be communicated to the Turkish Government for their concurrence.

No. 91.

Sir R. Lindsay to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received July 16.)(No. 96.)
(Telegraphic.)*Constantinople, July 16, 1926.*

YOUR telegram No. 79 and Bagdad No. 345 to Colonial Office. I am going to the capital to-day and will communicate accordingly with the Turkish Government, but I cannot help thinking it more important to bring Frontier Commission together quickly than get the Turkish Government to agree to some fixed agenda. Latter task may give rise to considerable correspondence if it is desired to have a very definite agenda.

I am taking cypher R only, and do not expect to be more than three days at the capital.

(Repeated to Bagdad, No. 36.)

No. 92.

Sir Austen Chamberlain to Sir R. Lindsay (Angora).

(No. 35.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Foreign Office, July 16, 1926.

YOUR telegram No. 92 of 10th July: Exchange of ratifications of Anglo-Turco-Iraq Treaty.

As first step towards constitution of Frontier Delimitation Commission (article 3 of treaty), you should suggest to the Turkish Government during your present visit to Angora that the Turkish and British Ministers at Berne should be instructed to approach the Swiss Government jointly with a view to nomination by Swiss President of a Swiss national as president of the commission. You should represent importance of commission being formed at an early date, since surveying operations will be impossible in mountainous country after summer months are over.

Please also approach Turkish Government in whatever manner you think best with a view to enabling the two Ministers at Berne to make proposals to the Swiss Government in regard to the remuneration to be offered to the president of the commission; and communicate to the High Commissioner for Iraq any terms which you may provisionally agree with the Turkish Government on this subject, so that Iraq Government may be consulted before they are committed to expenditure.

No. 93.

Sir R. Lindsay to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received July 19.)

(Unnumbered.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Angora, July 18, 1926.

RATIFICATIONS exchanged to-day.
(Repeated to Bagdad, 18th July.)

No. 94.

Sir R. Lindsay to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received July 19.)

(Unnumbered.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Angora, July 19, 1926.

YOUR telegram No. 35 of 16th.

Turkish Minister at Berne is being instructed to take concerted action with His Majesty's representative in requesting Swiss Government to appoint chairman of commission.

Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs suggests that Swiss authorities should be asked to propose remuneration, and that British and Turkish Ministers be authorised to accept it if reasonable.

No. 95.

Sir W. Tyrrell (for the Secretary of State) to Mr. Hoare (Constantinople).

(No. 93.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Foreign Office, September 9, 1926.

BAGDAD telegram to you, No. 199 S, of 4th September.

Please invite attention of Turkish Government to visit of Turkish tax collector to Dera, which is marked on map attached to treaty as being within Iraq territory.

CHAPTER IV.—GENERAL.

[W 6851/6851/17]

No. 96.

Mr. Randall to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received July 26.)(No. 116.)
Sir,*British Legation to the Holy See,
Rome, July 23, 1926.*

I HAVE the honour to report that the emphatic deference shown to Islam by the French Government during the recent years, a feature of French colonial policy which was lately strikingly exemplified in the visit of the Sultan of Morocco to Paris, is viewed with misgiving in Vatican circles. Part of this feeling may be due to resentment of the fact that by this excessive deference to Mahomedan sentiments Catholic influence in Northern Africa, always difficult to extend in the face of the most tenacious of non-Christian religions, may be limited or weakened. But there is also the strong belief that it is short-sighted policy on the part of the French authorities, who will one day be brought to realise that, far from reconciling Islam to their rule, they have only strengthened its prestige against themselves, with possible disastrous consequences at a later date.

No one, as a Vatican authority remarked to me, can ask that any European Power claiming dominion or protection over a largely Mahomedan country shall repress or openly discourage the national religion, but it is held to be more far-sighted to remember that the ultimate historical basis of Northern African civilisation is Berber and Roman, and that the Arabs would understand and respect the vigorous maintenance by Europeans of the religion with which they have always been identified in history. Italy once pursued this same policy of excessive deference to Islam, so much so that public services were not allowed in certain Catholic churches in Tripoli and Cyrenaica. But under the present régime this has been changed, and although complete respect is shown to the Islamic faith in Italy's African possessions the Catholic Church is given equal rights and ample opportunities of expansion, a policy which it is believed will be ultimately of great benefit to Italian prestige.

I have, &c.

A. W. G. RANDALL.

[E 5087/306/91]

No. 97.

The Marquess of Crewe to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received September 1.)

(No. 1648.)

HIS Majesty's representative at Paris presents his compliments to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and has the honour to transmit herewith copy of a note sent to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, dated the 31st August, 1926, respecting the Hejaz Railway.

Paris, August 31, 1926.

Enclosure in No. 97.

British Embassy to French Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

ON the 3rd June the Ministry for Foreign Affairs (Direction politique) were so good as to address a note to His Majesty's Embassy regarding the question of the reopening of the Hejaz Railway.

2. His Majesty's Embassy has the honour, under instructions from His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, to inform the Ministry for Foreign Affairs that His Majesty's Government welcome the determination of the Government of the Republic, as expressed in the above-mentioned note, to collaborate with them in the reconditioning and reopening to traffic of the Hejaz Railway. His Majesty's

Government are, in particular, gratified to learn that the French High Commissioner at Beirut has been instructed to make local arrangements for the redistribution of the locomotives and rolling-stock between the Palestinian and Syrian sections of the railway. Lord Plumer, the British High Commissioner at Jerusalem, is now only awaiting an invitation from the French High Commissioner to settle this question by mutual arrangement, after which it should, in the opinion of His Majesty's Government, be possible to proceed at an early date with the further measures indicated in the memorandum No. 330, which His Majesty's Embassy had the honour to address to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs on the 22nd May last.

3. His Majesty's Embassy ventures to remind the Ministry for Foreign Affairs that it is only by dealing with this question with the least possible delay that any hope can be entertained of putting the whole railway into working order before the 1927 pilgrimage season.

Paris, August 31, 1926.

[E 6834/703/65]

No. 98.

Sir O. Russell to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received December 14.)

(No. 193.)

*British Legation to the Holy See, Rome,
December 9, 1926.*

Sir, WITH reference to your despatch No. 148 of the 16th August last, I have the honour to report that the Holy See and the French Government have just signed in Paris an agreement settling the question of the liturgical honours to be rendered to representatives of the French Republic in the Near and Middle East; the Far East, to which the traditional French protectorate of Christians was extended only at a comparatively recent date, has not been touched. The text is about to be published and will be forwarded as soon as I can obtain a copy.

2. The honours which the Holy See, after long negotiations, now agrees shall be accorded are, as a general rule, restricted to three occasions in the year—Christmas, Easter and Pentecost. It is not intended that there shall be any provision of a raised seat within the sanctuary unless such is a permanent feature of the church's furniture, nor shall there be any ceremonial incensing as in the past. The principal signs of recognition shall be the meeting of the French consul at the entrance of the church, his installation in a special seat near the sanctuary, and the singing of a hymn in honour of France. A special clause lays it down that in Syria and the Lebanon the former traditional honours shall be paid in accordance with local custom. In Persia, too, the *status quo* will be maintained, and also in Bulgaria, the latter in virtue of the provisions of the Treaty of Berlin. In Turkey and Egypt honours will be rendered in a reduced form now prescribed, the French protectorate of Catholics in the former country being considered at an end, and in the latter only effective within the limits recognised by the Egyptian Government, in accordance with the memorandum enclosed in your despatch under reference. To Palestine and Iraq the agreement will naturally not apply for the reason given below under (a), but in any case it is laid down that in the service during which the honours are rendered there shall be nothing incompatible with the authority of the local mandatory Power.

3. The reservations which the Holy See has introduced into the agreement are as follows:—

- (a.) Its terms shall not apply in the event of opposition by the local Government.
- (b.) The honours shall not be rendered if the French representative is a non-Catholic, or even a Catholic against whom moral objections may be raised, such as a *divorcé*.
- (c.) The Holy See finally reserves the right to suspend the whole agreement should the Government of the Republic withdraw its diplomatic representative from the Vatican.

4. I gather that the basis of the agreement was reached by Cardinal Cerretti before he left his post as Nuncio in Paris, but that there were subsequent minor alterations made at the wish of the French Government, who sent M. Fromageot to Rome for the purpose. In making the application of the agreement dependent on the concurrence of the local authorities, the Cardinal Secretary of State has skilfully

escaped the danger of offending the susceptibilities of non-French Eastern Governments or mandatory Powers, but has not, of course, removed the possibility of protest on the part of Governments of other countries, who may now bestir themselves to obtain opposition to any special recognition of French claims even in their present attenuated form. Another danger is that the French Government may seek to represent the continuance of the honours as still implying a general recognition of the protectorate, and, in fact, published messages from Paris have already shown this tendency. This is altogether contrary to the view of the Holy See, which considers that, in countries where the Capitulations have been abolished by international treaties, there can be no continuation of the protectorate. The liturgical honours are, therefore, in general to be regarded purely as an outward recognition of the special services rendered by France in the past to the Church. I have no doubt that, if the Cardinal Secretary of State could have had his way, he would have preferred to end the entire arrangement, but the French Government, through their Ambassador here, have been so unremitting in their pressure on the Vatican that the latter have at last given way, the less unwillingly because of the improved general relations between France and the Holy See, of which the agreement may be taken as a notable expression.

I have, &c.

ODO RUSSELL.